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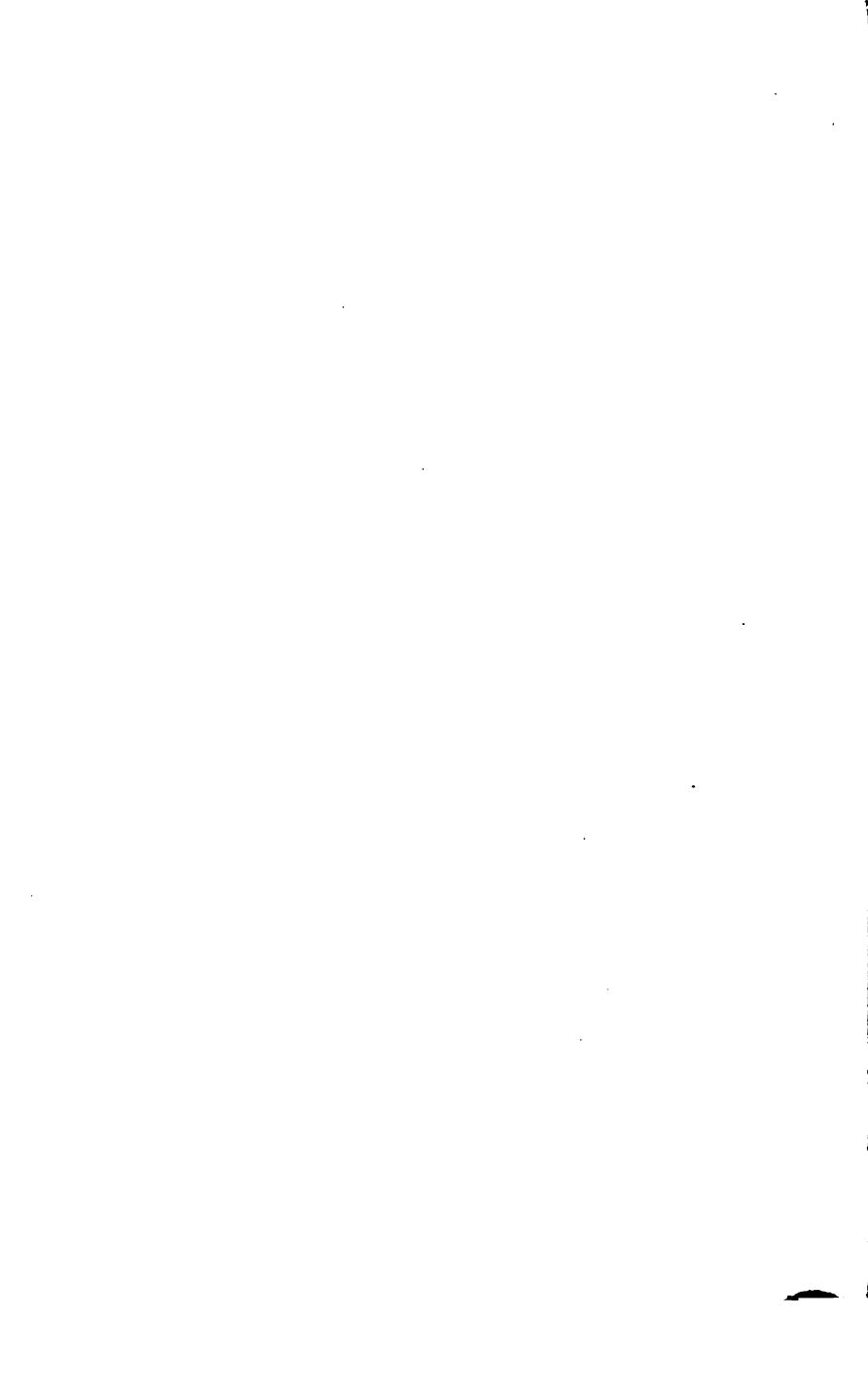


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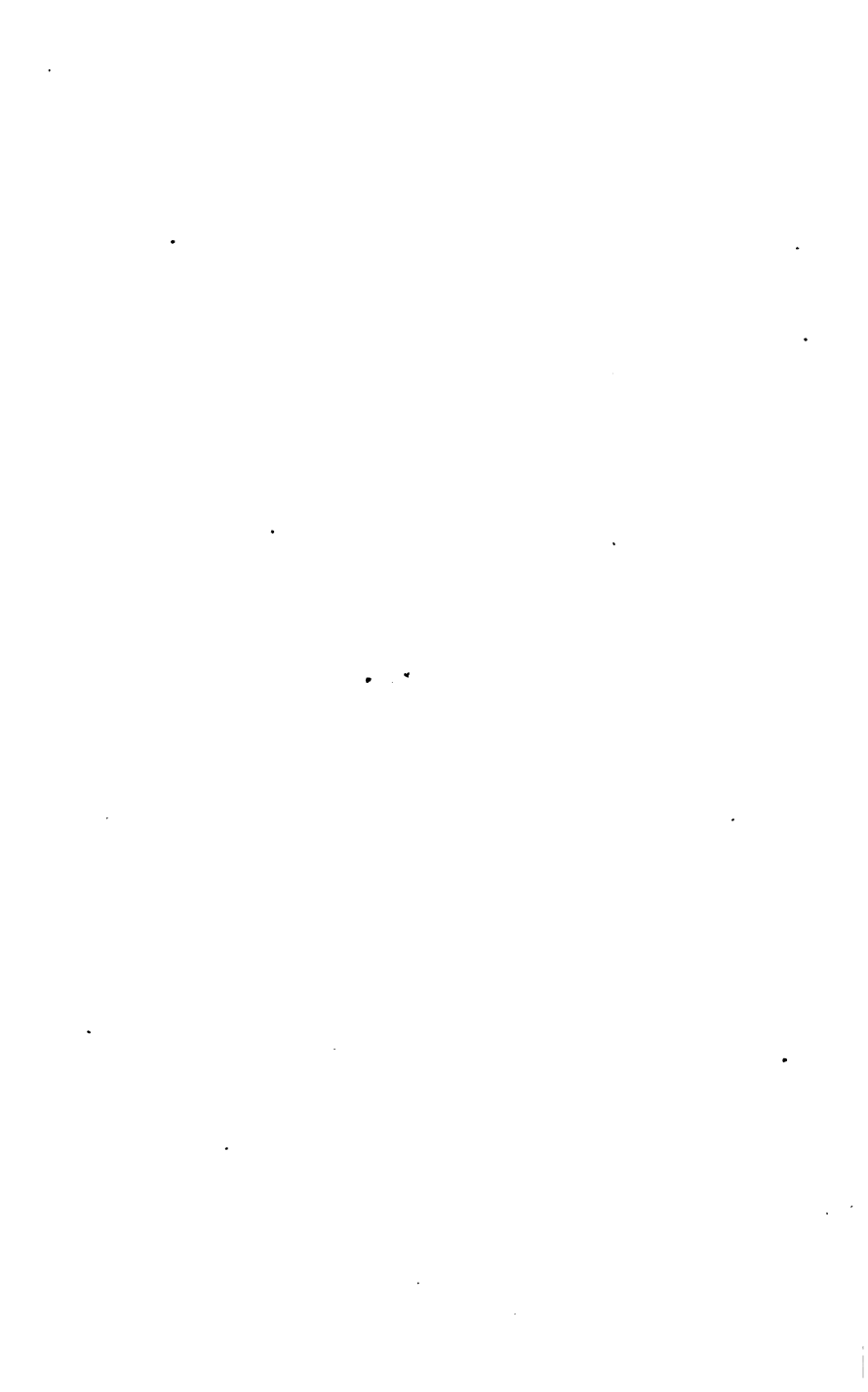
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**COMRADES**





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We needed no words

# COMRADES

BY

**MARY DILLON**

AUTHOR OF "MISS LIVINGSTON'S COMPANION," "IN  
OLD BELLAIRE," "ROSE OF OLD  
ST. LOUIS," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

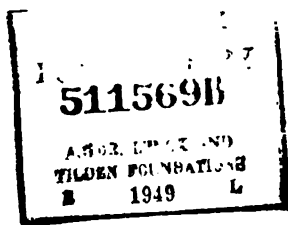
**R. M. BRINKERHOFF**



NEW YORK  
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1918

W.K.F.



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*Published, January, 1918*

*Withdrawn*

II

TO

H. C. M.

MY NAME-SAINT

Whose ninety years have each one  
added brilliancy to her intellect,  
exaltation to her spirit, glow  
to her affections and  
grace to all her  
social relations

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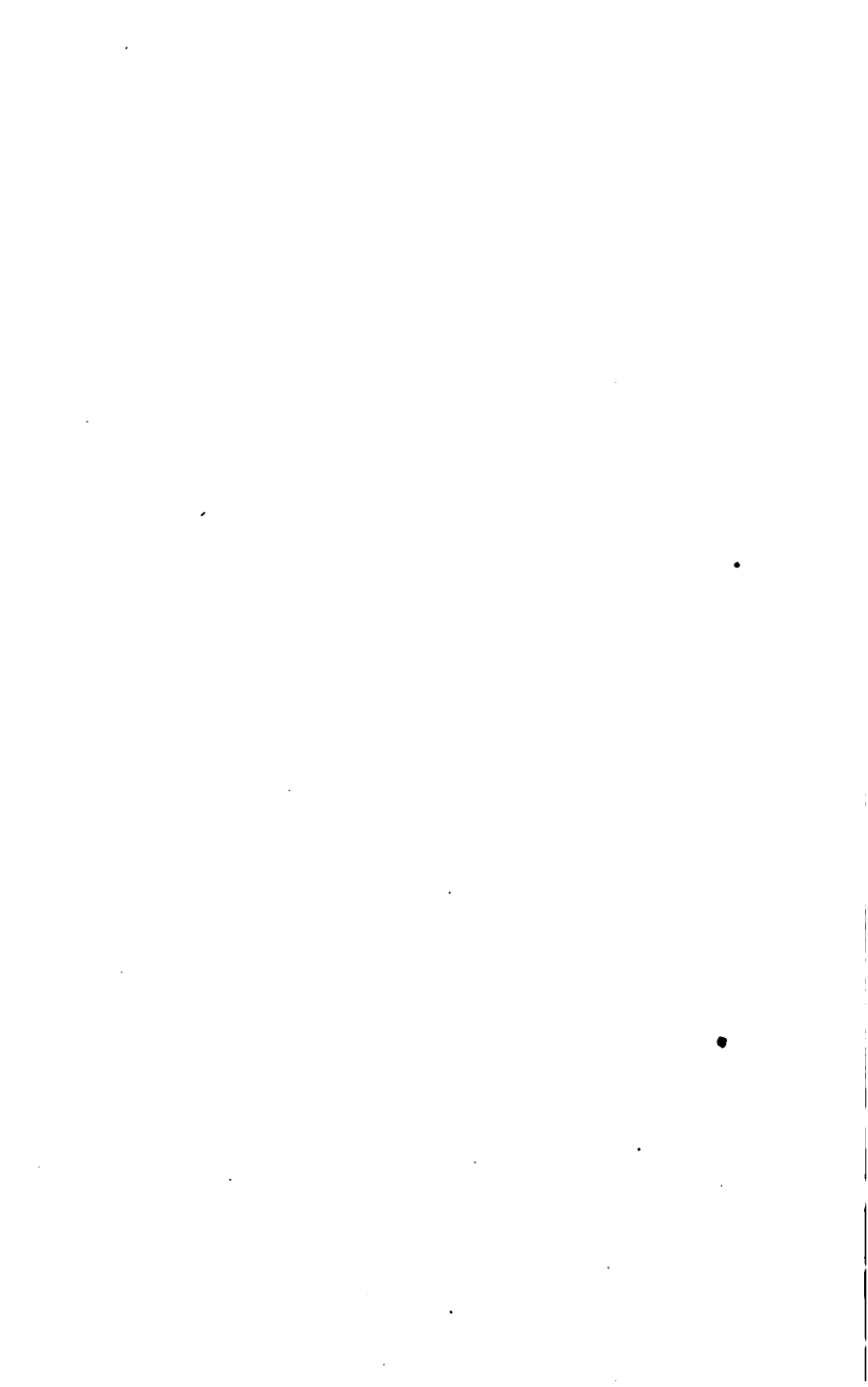


## FOREWORD

Many happy days spent among the kindly and simple-hearted Saxons only add to the poignancy of my sorrow that they should have been deluded and driven into this awful holocaust by Prussian Junkerism, Militarism, and Kaiserism.

MARY DILLON.





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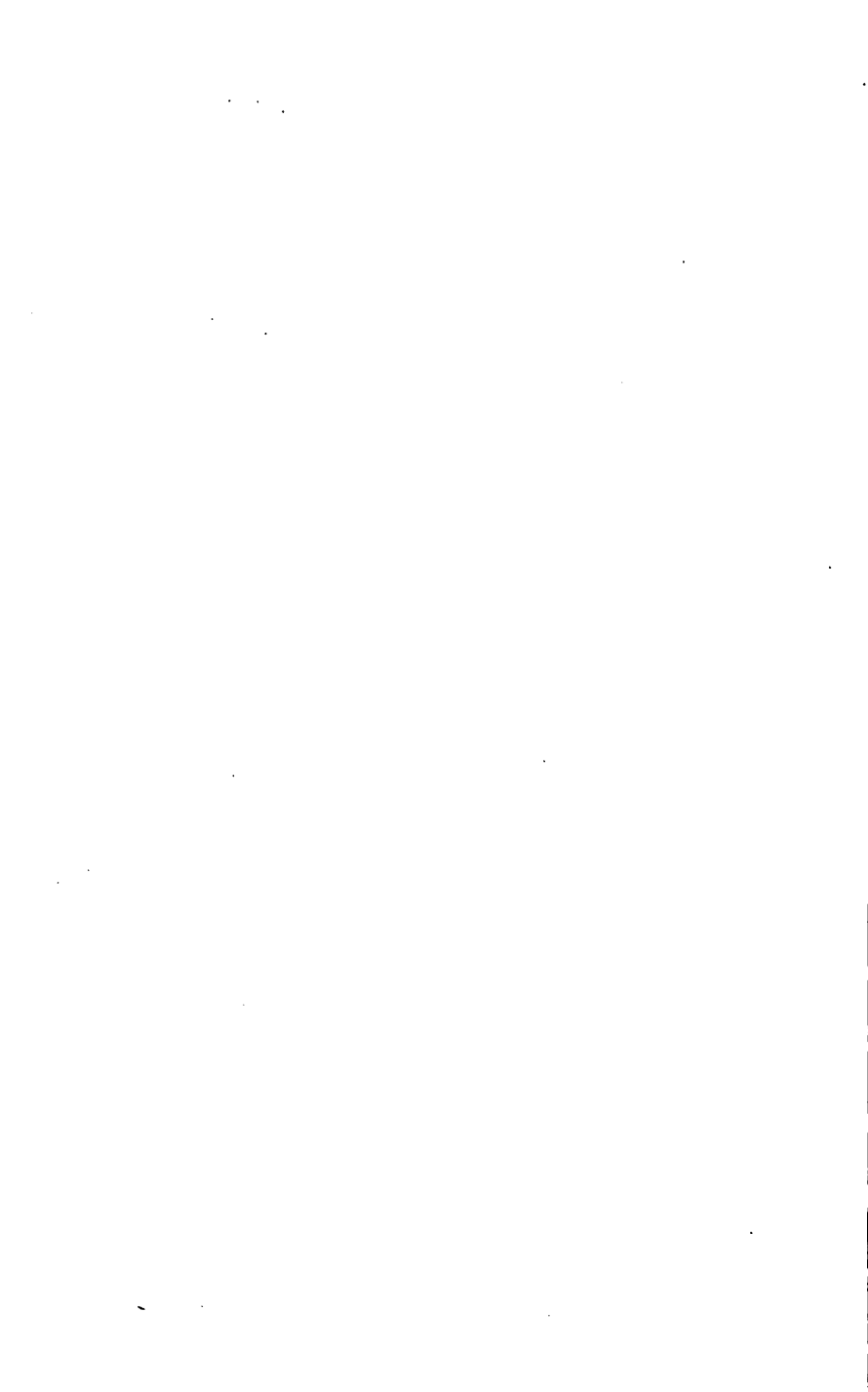
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**COMRADES**



# COMRADES

## CHAPTER I

### I MEET HER ON THE BRÜHLSCHÉ TERRASSE

**I** WAS never quite sure what finally decided me to choose Leipzig as my university instead of Berlin. Since my idea was to fit myself for the diplomatic service, Berlin would seem to offer the greater inducements.

I did not intend to study for a degree; my plan was to spend a year in Leipzig and then go on to Paris and the Sorbonne. There were some lectures I wanted to attend in each university, but I particularly wanted to perfect my French and German, since the diplomatic service, even if one is only a secretary of legation, demands fluency in these tongues.

All the more reason, one would think, for choosing Berlin, since the Hanoverian German, universal in Berlin, is conceded to be the purest and the Saxon the most execrable of Germany's many dialects. But I have almost come to think fate manages these things for us. Certainly life would have lost its crowning glory for me if I had not gone to Leipzig to study in October, 1913.

I think it very likely that Fitzmaurice's account of Lamprecht's lectures finally decided me.



"Any one who can understand Lamprecht," said Fitz, "can understand any German. Half the students of his native Saxony can't follow him, because he speaks so rapidly. Moreover, he is Germany's foremost historian, and his course in the secrets of diplomacy from 1865 to 1870 should prove invaluable to a would-be diplomat."

I suppose that is what decided me, though, as I said before, I almost believe fate takes a hand in these matters.

I had taken my B.A. degree at Oxford during Commemoration Week in July; I had spent August shooting with Fitzmaurice at his hunting-lodge in the Highlands; September I had devoted to traveling through Germany, finishing up at Dresden for a taste of the opera before settling down to work at Leipzig. I am unusually keen on music, for an Englishman, but I had had comparatively few chances to hear grand opera and had never heard "The Ring." It was the week of "The Ring" at the Dresden opera-house, a week of revelations to me, a week of tremendous sensations.

My landlady,—I was stopping at a pension, and had a dear old white-haired, sweet-faced Frau Pastor for a landlady,—informed me that this was also the last week of the open-air concerts on the Brühlische Terrasse and that I must not fail to spend one evening there. The music was good, she said, and I would see Dresden in its most characteristic aspect. The "Ring" was given only every other evening, and I was quite willing to sacrifice one of the off nights from opera.

Tuesday was a warm, sunny day. I had better take advantage of it, my landlady advised, to visit the Ter-

rasse; no one could be sure in September that the weather would not suddenly turn cool, when an evening on the Terrasse would be too chilly for comfort.

The opera the evening before had been the first of "The Ring" cycle, *Das Rheingold*, of course, and a motif from it was ringing in my ears as I chose a little table in front of the Belvedere, sat down and ordered a stein of Pilsener. Though the music was ringing in my ears, I was not thinking of the opera, but of a young girl I had passed three times in the foyer the evening before, between the acts.

We Englishmen are sometimes accused of being particularly impressionable. I wonder if we are. It is the Americans who accuse us; no sentimental German, susceptible Frenchman, or ardent Italian would think of making such an accusation. But I believe Americans are a little colder-hearted or cooler-headed than we are. Thompson of New York says they never think of falling in love with a girl until they have met her at least three times.

Now I did not call myself in love with this young girl, but she had certainly aroused my interest sufficiently to keep me thinking of her all through the first number of the excellent music rendered by the Belvedere orchestra. I had arrived early. There were still many vacant tables when I chose mine, but they were rapidly filling up, and halfway through the first number a party of officers in the exquisite pale blue and silver of the Royal Saxon Guard took a vacant table on one side of me.

I had lived long enough in Germany to learn to detest the average German officer. No doubt there were officers neither vain *ad nauseam* nor so insolent as to

push a woman from the sidewalk if it happened to be too narrow for both of them, but so far I had not met any. This group of officers was no exception to the rule about vanity. No sooner were they comfortably seated, their steins before them, than they took out pocket-mirrors and combs and started on their usual process—combing and training upward their blond mustaches. Not that I object to blond mustaches. My own mustache by no stretch of imagination could be called anything darker than red-gold, but it droops as nature intended it should on each side of my mouth; and, had I desired to train it up instead of down, no Englishman would think of selecting a table in public as the proper time and place for such a toilet.

I would not look at them much; they stirred my ire with their bold stares and smirks at the pretty Fräuleins at other tables, and I set myself to listening to the music and dreaming of the girl I had seen in the foyer of the Hof-Theater the night before. Brown eyes, merry and soft, brown hair in deep waves around a shapely little head, but crinkling and curling softly around the face, a mouth like a scarlet bow, and skin creamy and smooth as polished ivory tinted with rose. She was dressed in some kind of pale shimmering green, with soft folds of white at the neck that set off her flower-like head and face as the calyx of a rose sets off the glowing bud.

I had very quickly discovered that I was not the only one impressed by her startling beauty. Natty young officers, striding the foyer with clanking swords and clinking heels, were ogling her and trying to attract her attention, and a villainous looking, black-eyed fellow, from some one of the Mediterranean countries I felt

sure, was following her with stealthy, vulture-like glances. She did not seem to see any of them, nor did she seem to see me. I passed her twice and, though I hope I did not stare disagreeably, if she had been looking at me, she could not have failed to note that my covert glances were deeply interested ones.

She had with her, as chaperone, a little old lady who bore the most alert face I have ever seen on any woman. I could not think she was the girl's mother; there was not a point of resemblance between them. The girl had the effect of being tall, though I think she would no more than come to my shoulder, an effect due to her slender suppleness and the grace of her swimming gait. The older woman was short, well-padded with flesh, and a little inclined to waddle as she walked. While the girl's eyes were soft and brown, the woman's were keen and gray, looking the more severe because one saw them through big, round-eyed spectacles heavily rimmed with tortoise-shell. The girl's mouth was a cupid's bow, the woman's a bow tightly drawn, ready to let loose a winged shaft. No, she could not be the girl's mother, but I confess she seemed admirably adapted as watch-dog for such a beautiful creature.

Neither could I decide on the girl's nationality, though I finally came to the conclusion that she was either French or American. There was an air about her that no German Fräulein could possibly have achieved, nor do our English girls carry themselves with quite the poise and subtle grace of this one. Our girls are beautiful,—I think, on the whole, none in the world are so beautiful,—and they are often graceful, but there is a difference in the quality of their grace and beauty.

Now, as I have said, neither the chaperone nor the girl seemed to pay any attention to the bold glances of the officers and the Southerner, or to my more modest ones. But as I was making a third tour of the foyer, in the hope of meeting them again, there came upon the scene a man before whom they did not remain so unperturbed.

I had seen him earlier in the evening. Before this I had had occasion to note that there are many handsome men among the Germans, but I think this man was about the most perfect specimen of a certain type of manly beauty that I have ever met anywhere. He was of the Siegfried type, a golden and rose beauty that yet did not detract from the appearance of strength. Very perfect features,—they might have come fresh from the chisel of Praxiteles,—surmounted by short, crisp waves of lustrous golden hair, adorned a noble head set superbly on its broad base. I am tall myself, and I rather pride myself on my breadth of shoulder, but this man, I was sure, would dwarf me into insignificance should I stand beside him.

Now, as I was about to pass the girl for the third time, I saw a sudden light spring into her eyes, followed by a swift drooping of the lids and a faint deepening of the delicate rose of her cheek. I felt very sure it was not I who had had this perturbing effect—she had not even glanced at me—and the moment I had passed her I turned to see who had produced it. It was “Siegfried,” and his eyes, of a brilliant blue, fixed upon the girl’s downcast ones, were glowing with what I had to confess was a perfectly respectful though ardent admiration. A moment later the chaperone spoke to the girl. The two turned and found their way back to their

seats, where I, my seat being in the fourth rung, could not discover them.

That had been on Monday. On this Tuesday evening as I sat alone at my little table on the Terrasse, the waxing crescent of a young moon hanging over the Elbe enamored of its own reflection in the sparkling waters, the subdued murmur of the gay throng all about me, the air soft and warm as a night in June and palpitating with the witching strains of Tschaikowsky's *Romeo and Juliet*, I found myself dreaming of this girl who had been, if possible, more beautiful with the darkly fringed curtains of her white lids dropped than with them lifted. I began to wish that I had gone to the opera again, and to vividly picture to myself the meeting in the foyer, perhaps at this moment taking place, between "Siegfried" and the girl. I decided that as soon as this number was over I would hurry over to the Hof-Theater; it would be but a short walk along the Terrasse and around the corner of the Hofkirche, whose quaint tower I could dimly discern in the moonlight, into the brilliantly lighted Theater-Platz. I might yet be in time for the intermission at the opera and the promenade in the foyer, I was saying to myself, when *Romeo and Juliet* came to a sudden end—sudden, that is, to me, for I had been wrapped in my dreams.

There was a general stir, with clinking glasses, raised voices, and hurrying feet of waiters, and I became aware that the only vacant table in my vicinity was being occupied by two ladies. I was in the act of rising to carry out my intention of hurrying over to the opera, when something in the air of increased self-consciousness in the officers, as with one accord they boldly turned in

their seats and stared at the newcomers, made me turn to look at the arrivals. I could not see the face of the younger of the two, her back was turned; I could only catch a glimpse of a white neck with dark curls clustering about its whiteness, but there was no mistaking the keen gray eyes behind the huge tortoise-shell spectacles facing me.

I sat down again hurriedly, and a waiter running up in response to what he thought was my effort to attract his attention, and my big stein not half-empty, I yet felt compelled to order something and called for cognac and a biscuit. I did not want them at all and I hated to pay for them, since I was doing my best to economize in order to give my finances a chance to recover from the inroads of travel.

But my two marks were well invested. During the next number on the program nothing occurred, except that my ire rose steadily as the stares of the officers grew bolder and more offensive. I thought I could detect that the two women were annoyed, the younger betraying it by a faint rose flush on the white pillar of her neck and an occasional uneasy movement of her head, the older by a glint of steel in the sharp gray eyes and by lips each moment more tightly compressed. With all my heart I wished there were some way for me to put an end to their annoyance, but I could think of none, since there was no overt act on the part of the officers to which I could openly object.

At the beginning of the intermission my attention was diverted for a moment by a bow from a woman seated a few tables away. It was a bow that seemed to demand that I should go and speak to her, but at the

moment I could not recall her name. I was quite sure I had met her somewhere, for her face had a familiar look, but while I was puzzling over her identity my attention was distracted from my two neighbors.

It was sharply recalled by a sudden stir at their table. I glanced toward them. They were rising hurriedly, and the face of the younger woman being now turned toward me, I saw that it was flushed as with anger. I turned quickly toward the officers' table; the overt act had probably been committed, and I had failed to see it and so lost my chance of resenting it.

But some one else had not been so dilatory. As I was in the very act of turning, a superb figure, coming from behind me, flashed into sight and with two strides brought himself abruptly to a standstill by the officers' table. There was a short, sharp question from "Siegfried," and the four officers were on their feet in an instant. There was a confusion of loud, angry, excited German, and a clinking of swords. People all over the place were rising from their tables, stretching their necks and adding to the confusion by their excited exclamations. For a moment I was in doubt whether to lend my support to "Siegfried" or offer assistance to the two women. I turned to look for them. A policeman, with the usual crass stupidity of policemen, had stopped the innocent victims instead of the guilty offenders. The girl was plainly terrified, the woman bristling with indignation. I knew how easy it was to get into trouble with the German police, and I followed them quickly to be on hand should they need assistance.

At the moment of my coming the policeman was insisting that the two women accompany him, and the older



woman, in unmistakable United States, was giving him "a piece of her mind," she termed it. Of course he understood not a word, but he understood the wrath of her tone and was only the more implacable, while the girl tried to pacify him in fairly fluent German. I stepped quickly up to the policeman, my card in my hand, and offered it to him at once.

"Will you permit me, Herr Offizier," (I thought he might be flattered by the title and so cajoled into a better humor) "to stand guarantee for these two ladies? I saw the whole affair and they are not responsible for the disturbance. They were sitting quietly at a table, were annoyed by the over admiring glances of some officers, and were trying to get away quietly. You can call on me as witness should any trouble result."

The man glanced at my card, discovered that I was English, and grumblingly acquiesced,—“provided that the gnädige Frau and the gnädiges Fraulein also left their addresses and consented to appear if called upon.”

This they willingly agreed to do, and the man went off, reluctantly I could see, to settle the fracas at the officers' table. It is never very safe for even a policeman to interfere with officers in Germany.

I paid no further attention to the disturbance for the two women were thanking me, the girl timidly but warmly, the woman grimly, for my "rescue." I was too young, and possibly too good-looking, to win the chaperone's unqualified gratitude.

The girl had spoken in German; she had not seen my card and did not know my nationality. I spoke in English, of course, and both women looked relieved at once. There is a tie between Anglo-Saxons the world over that

one recognizes instinctively. No doubt they had taken me for a German and they had some reason to distrust Germans.

"May I call a taxi for you, Madam?" I asked the older woman. "And if you don't mind, I will ride beside the chauffeur and see you safely to your destination. You have had adventures enough for one evening."

They were relieved and did not hesitate to say so, though they insisted I should not ride with the chauffeur, but inside.

However, there was no taxi at hand, only one poor old droschke, with a lame horse and a disreputable looking cocher. I proposed that they should either wait until I could hunt up a taxi—there would surely be one on the Theater-Platz, if no nearer—or we should walk until we met one. But they would not hear of waiting; they were terrified and wanted to get out of the neighborhood at once.

Dresden is a city of short distances. They said they lived near the Grosser Garten and it would have been a short walk past the Albertinum and through the broad and pleasant Johann Georgen-Allee. I thought of proposing it, since the night was warm and beautiful, but I did not quite dare. Instead, we walked along the lovely Brühlsche Terrasse, the waters of the Elbe glinting through the trees, the music from the Belvedere,—it had begun again,—following us in softened strains, down the broad and stately flight of steps adorned by Schilling's magnificent groups into the Schloss-Platz, and across the platz beyond the Hofkirche into the brilliantly lighted Theater-Platz.

To my mind there is nothing more beautiful in Europe than the Theater-Platz of Dresden. The swelling front of the opera-house, adorned with its wonderful sculptures; facing it across the platz the quaintly ornate, rococo Hofkirche; the Ionic columns of the guard-house; and the long, low Zwinger, the finest specimen of the baroque in Germany,—all circling around Schilling's fine statue of King Johann, looking off over the Elbe gliding swiftly by among its trees.

The Theater-Platz is always brilliantly lighted and, at the hours when I had visited it before, was gay with taxis, droschkas, and limousines, with throngs of well-dressed people entering or leaving the opera-house. But as we stopped for a moment, enthralled by the beauty of the scene,—the moon, scarcely more than a crescent, hanging over the court of the Zwinger, and turning the waters of its great fountain into flashing silver as it slowly sank to the west,—we were almost startled by the quiet loveliness of the spot. Not a cab or a vehicle of any kind was in sight, and only one or two stray pedestrians crossed the platz. An hour hence it would be a stirring scene, but now silence reigned, and there was no hope of a taxi.

"I'm sorry to have brought you out of your way on a fool's errand," I said to the girl, whose name I did not know. "If you wait, I will hunt one up and bring it here."

"Oh, no," she answered quickly, "we'll walk; it's not far. Isn't that better, Miss Martin?" appealing to her chaperone.

"Yes," agreed the latter, "since the taxis have all disappeared so mysteriously."

"Then I'm doubly sorry that I brought you so far out of your way; it was a much shorter walk from the Terrasse."

But the girl declared that the sight of the Theater-Platz in the bright moonlight, looking lovelier than she had ever seen it, had amply repaid them, and even the grim Miss Martin said it was no matter,—Beatrice and she were good walkers and the night was fine.

So her name was Beatrice! No name could have suited her better. All the Beatrices I had known in art or story looked just as she looked,—or so I had pictured them,—save that her soft brown eyes were merry, while the other Beatrices' were sad.

I insisted on seeing them safely to their destination, and though they demurred a little,—they did not like to give me so much trouble,—I think they were glad of my protection. We crossed over behind the Royal Schloss into the Schloss-Strasse, and so through the Altmarkt, at this hour silent and deserted, the flower-girls and quaint old market-women having gone for the day. Passing the picturesque Rathhaus we stopped a moment to admire its eighteenth century architecture, and as we halted I caught a glimpse of a man stepping quickly behind Henze's marble statue of Germania that adorns the Altmarkt. Though I knew there need not necessarily be anything suspicious in his act, for he might be admiring it as we were admiring the Rathhaus, I was disturbed. There was something sinister and something vaguely familiar in the outlines of that slender, dark figure slinking so swiftly out of sight. I did not think either Miss Martin or Beatrice had noticed him, and I said nothing to call their attention to him, but I kept a

furtive watch in his direction and was glad when the two women professed themselves satisfied and we started to cross the Altmarkt.

We passed close to the Germania and I had an uncomfortable feeling that that sinister figure was crouching in the shadows behind it, but I hoped the man was more anxious not to be seen than I was not to see him. The two women paused for a moment under the tall tower of the Kreuz-Kirche and I fairly fidgeted, for I was sure I had heard stealthy steps behind us, though when I looked back I could see no one. The ladies were evidently thoroughgoing sight-seers and knew their Baedeker well, and Miss Martin, at least, was determined her charge should miss no opportunity of becoming well informed on the history of every old building in Dresden. I was compelled to listen to a lecture in brief on the Prussian bombardment of 1760, the restoration of the church, the height of its tower, and the destruction of its interior by fire in 1897. I thought Beatrice was somewhat embarrassed by what she might have considered an inopportune moment for this lecture, but she was too considerate of Miss Martin's feelings to do more than make one or two ineffectual efforts to move on.

As we started on again I no longer heard the stealthy steps behind us. They had passed on along the Kreuz-Strasse, and I felt relieved. But just as we entered the broad and beautiful Bürgerwiese there stepped out from the Georgs-Platz and passed directly in front of us, turning to stare at Beatrice as he passed, a darkly clad, sinister figure. I recognized it at once as the man I had seen slip behind the Germania. He was the one I had noticed the evening before in the foyer of the opera-

house devouring Beatrice with vulture-like glances. She had not seemed to notice him in the opera-house, but as he passed under the strong flare of the street-lamp I saw a spasm of disgust or fear sweep swiftly over her face, followed by a strong shudder almost like a convulsion.

"What is the matter, Beatrice?" Miss Martin asked, alarmed at the shudder.

"It's that man again," Beatrice answered in a low voice, not entirely under control. "I meet him everywhere, and he stares at me so horribly. I feel as if he were some dreadful kind of snake."

Miss Martin tried to laugh her out of her strong emotion.

"He is only a common 'masher,'" she said. "That is what we call them at home, Mr. ——" and she stopped short.

"Mr. Hatfield," I said quickly, glad of the chance to introduce myself, "of Hatfield Abbey, England."

"Pleased to know you," she responded, in what I took to be a quaint form of United States speech. "I am Miss Hester Martin and this is my young friend Miss Beatrice Ludlow, both of Kentucky, U. S. A. There, now we are all properly introduced, Mr. Hatfield of Hatfield Abbey."

Beatrice and I both laughed. I did so a little shamefacedly, for I saw the little woman was making good-natured fun of my pretentious "Hatfield Abbey."

"I can't lay much claim to the Abbey, Miss Martin," I said. "I'm only a younger son with my own way to make, and I shall not always be able to call the Abbey my home."

"I like younger sons, I believe, better than 'heirs apparent'; I don't stand in such awe of them," she said, still with her air of good-natured mockery. I saw that I was accepted as an acquaintance, at least, and felt unreasonably glad that it should be so.

While we talked we had been walking along the Bürgerwiese, lined with its handsome villas, and I had been thinking they had chosen a delightful route to their pension, whose location I did not yet know. Suddenly, directly opposite the gardens of the Prinz-Georgs Palais, they stopped before the most magnificent villa on the Bürgerwiese. I was stupidly wondering why, when Miss Martin put out her hand.

"Good night, Mr. Hatfield," she said; "this is our destination."

"Oh, good night," I said, still dazed, as I took her hand.

"If we were in America," she said crisply, "I would invite you into the house, for you have been so good to us. But we are visiting our friend the Baroness von Kempner, and I am not sufficiently familiar with the customs of the country to venture to invite a stranger into a house that is not our own. But I shall tell the baroness of your courtesy to us, and no doubt she will send you an invitation to call."

"Then I will see you again?" I ventured eagerly, beginning to recover a little from my stupor and turning to Beatrice, who was also extending her hand timidly.

"Oh, yes, we will surely see you," Beatrice answered. "Auf wiedersehen, Mr. Hatfield."

At the sound of our voices the vestibule-door had

opened, and a lackey in livery stood waiting for the two to enter.

"Auf wiedersehen," I said, hastily, and for the life of me could not resist giving that little hand a more friendly pressure than our acquaintance might have warranted.

She did not resent it. I even fancied I felt a faint pressure in return. I stood and watched them up the steps, for I wanted to see them safely within doors. At the top of the steps Beatrice turned and waved her hand. I lifted my hat, the door closed behind them, and I turned—and faced the black-visaged Southerner! He had followed us here; he was too evidently spying on the American girl! I was not sure that he was not a dangerous fellow.

As I passed him he returned my fierce scowl with an insolent smile, half smirk, half sneer.



## CHAPTER II

### I BLUNDER TWICE IN THE SAME FASHION

**I**T was not until I was entering the rez-de-chaussée of my pension that I suddenly remembered I had given neither Miss Martin nor Beatrice my address; the Baronin von Kempner would not know where to send that invitation to call.

It was very stupid of me, but it also had been stupid of them. Or, could it have been an intentional oversight on Miss Martin's part, I asked myself with sudden suspicion. Very likely it had only been a scheme of hers—this promise of an invitation—to get rid of a troublesome acquaintance. Possibly, too, she wanted to allow herself time to make inquiries at the English Consulate as to my credentials. I did not think they had ever heard of me at the consulate; I would go in the morning and give an account of myself.

The elation with which I had received Miss Martin's promise of an invitation—I had walked to my pension as one treading on air—had been dispelled for the moment by the thought of my stupidity, but only for the moment. I would surely see Beatrice at *Die Walküre* the next night. I might even run across her in the morning at the museum, and the mistake would soon be rectified.

It was the custom at the pension for "Tony," the bright-faced waitress, to come around at dinner,—as usual in Germany, it was a midday meal,—and lean

confidentially over the shoulder of each guest, inquiring in his ear:

“Gehen—sie zum Opera dieses Ahend?”

If one's answer was “Yah, Fraulein,” she quickly added, “Abend-essen nach sex uhre,” or “fünf uhre,” “fünf uhre und dreizig minuten,” as the case might be. With “The Ring” the hour was likely to be five, since the opera would probably begin at six, which brought the supper-hour unappetizingly near the two o'clock dinner.

So it was broad daylight, the low sun streaming in my eyes, when I walked down Pragerstrasse toward the Hof-Theater. I had been greatly tempted to turn off from my direct route, cross over to the Bürgerwiese and thus pass the Baron Von Kempner's, but modesty held me back. I was glad enough I had not yielded to the temptation when, just as I was turning into the Schloss-Strasse, I came face to face with an open landau, also turning into the strasse from the Altmarkt.

Sitting beside a handsome woman, whom I took to be the Baronin von Kempner, was Miss Martin, but though her big tortoise-shell spectacles were turned directly toward me, she did not seem to see me. Whether she really did not or whether this was intended as the cut direct, I could not be sure, but the landau rolling on I saw, her back to the horses, Beatrice sitting beside a distinguished-looking man, no doubt the baron. There was no question of her not seeing me, and though her bow was of the slightest, scarcely more than a nod, the smile that accompanied it was of the friendliest. Once more I walked on air down the Schloss-Strasse, crossed the Schloss-Platz and the Theater-Platz and entered the opera-house.

I did not for a moment doubt that I would meet Beatrice in the foyer during an intermission, and though it would require some courage to brave the severe glances of her chaperone, and, possibly, the haughty ones of the baronin, the requisite courage should not be lacking. The card which I had carefully changed to the pocket of my evening clothes,—for the first time I was wearing them to the opera,—should be transferred to her safe-keeping. I had even been tempted to take a seat in the first or second rung in order that I might have the pleasure of an occasional glance at her in her box, but I resisted the temptation as a useless extravagance, for I would be sure to meet her in the foyer.

But at each intermission I haunted the foyer in vain. Back and forth I trudged, staring eagerly at every beautiful woman, but I never had a glimpse of Beatrice, her chaperone, or the baronin. Perhaps Beatrice was afraid of meeting the dark-browed Southerner, or the officers who had annoyed her on the Terrasse, or "Siegfried"; or perhaps it was I whom the chaperone was trying to avoid.

We were all there, all with a look in our eyes that one could easily recognize as the keen and restless glance of the hunter. At least the others had it, and so, I suppose, had I. I recognized the four officers of the Terrasse, clanking their swords in unison and boldly staring in every direction. I would have liked to scowl at them as I passed, but since they had never seen me, it would have been foolish. I passed "Siegfried,"—he also had the covert look of the hunter in his eyes,—and I could not resist a half bow in recognition of his gallant defense of the two women. I don't suppose he under-

stood the bow, for I fancy he too had never seen me, but he returned it gravely and courteously. He was wearing a long strip of court-plaster on one cheek and I believed I knew the reason. He must have challenged the offending officer, after the manner of Germans, for his insult to Beatrice, whatever that had been, and had received a scratch on his face that, also after the manner of Germans, he would bear all his life as a mark of honor. No doubt he was terribly disappointed that Beatrice was not there to see it.

And the black-visaged Southerner was on hand with his restless, hawk-like glances. Though I tried to avoid looking at him, I was aware of the supercilious smile with which he honored me as I passed him. I might have scowled at him with good grace, and he would have known why, but I felt he was not worthy of notice.

Much as I love music I could not enjoy *Die Walküre* and the last strains were still echoing back from the beautiful paintings of the vaulted ceiling as I hurried down to the exedra. The baron and his party could not easily escape passing out this way, and I took my station under Schilling's bronze quadriga, sure, at least, of another bow and smile from Beatrice.

But no Beatrice passed through the exedra; her party must have left earlier or departed by some private exit. I started off for home profoundly depressed, and did not remember until well up the Prager-Strasse that I had made an appointment with two young Americans from my pension to meet them at supper at the Eng-lischer Garten after the opera. I would have liked to break the engagement had it been possible. Since it was not, I did not turn back directly to the Waisenhaus-

Strasse, where the Englischer Garten is located, but made a detour through Sidonien-Strasse, past the pretty English Church on the broad Wiener-Strasse and then by a short and narrow street, whose name I do not recall, to the Bürgerwiese, close to the von Kempner villa. There I had the melancholy pleasure of standing for full ten minutes under the shadow of the fine lime-trees, watching the lighted windows of the villa and saying to myself: "Beatrice is there behind those drawn curtains, and perhaps she is thinking of the Englishman she met on the Terrasse."

During the following two or three days I haunted every morning the Museum, the Grüne Gewölbe, the Johanneum, all spots where one is apt to meet tourists, and in the evenings I divided my time between the opera and the Terrasse; but not once did I catch a glimpse of Beatrice. I began to lose all hope of ever seeing her again and to believe that she must have left Dresden, for, owing to its topography and its four or five superlative attractions, it is a city where one is sure sooner or later to meet everybody one knows.

I tried to persuade myself that my interest in Beatrice was only a passing one, that I would soon forget her and my unrest and longing would be soothed by oblivion. To accomplish that desirable end quickly I determined to take more interest in my fellow-pensionaires. They were most of them Americans, and some of the young girls were exceedingly pretty and attractive. Nor did they seem entirely indifferent to the young Englishman. I had smiles and coy glances from several of them—which it would have been unbecoming in me not to return in kind—and invitations to visit art galleries and

treasure-vaults, or to join in expeditions to some of the interesting points in the environs of Dresden. Two of those invitations I accepted, one to Meissen, where we spent what my old tutor would have called a "profitable afternoon" visiting the grand old castle and the famous porcelain works; the other to the Bastei in Saxon Switzerland. I thoroughly enjoyed that afternoon in the Bastei. To say nothing of the wonderful scenery, there was in our party a vivacious little blonde from San Francisco, who came nearer to making me forget Beatrice for the time being than I would have thought possible.

But when another expedition was proposed for the Monday following "The Ring," I demurred. Saturday night had brought the grand climax of the cycle in *Die Gotterdämmerung*; I had drunk my fill of Wagner and had paced the foyer in vain for a glimpse of Beatrice. Pacing that foyer restlessly, I determined to leave Dresden for Leipzig on Monday. Nothing could be a surer cure for my sick fancy than to settle down to hard work. To be sure, the university would not open for another week or two, but I could select my rooms, make those formal calls demanded by etiquette upon the professors whose classes I chose to elect, and spend any other leisure left me in some stiff reading at the library.

Therefore, when at Sunday dinner the little San Franciscan informed me of a projected trip to the Bohemian Switzerland on Monday, and that I was expected to make one of the party, I rather enjoyed telling her that I was leaving for Leipzig in the morning. The chorus of remonstrance that my announcement roused

pleased my vanity, but I did not intend to be moved from my resolution by it. Had I not spent my morning wandering from the Hofkirche down on the Theater-Platz to the English Church on the Wiener-Strasse, and from there to the American Church on the Reichs-Platz—a route which took in the Altstadt, from the Elbe to the plains of Rackintz—vainly scanning every woman in each congregation for a glimpse of Beatrice? No; it was evident she had left Dresden, and I would leave it, too.

But when the little San Franciscan looked at me appealingly out of her pretty blue eyes and said, with her quaint Yankee burr, "Please go with us, Mr. Hatfield," I succumbed, like the soft-hearted Englishman my American friends accuse us of being.

Having yielded, I determined to enjoy my outing and the pretty Miss Curtis' bewitchments to the full. It was to be an all-day affair. The morning was perfect, the party gay, somewhat noisy but never rude, and the scenery, if not so curious, even lovelier than the Saxon Schweiz. From Herrnskretchen we climbed the picturesque road to the Prebischthor with its wonderful view, and at the little restaurant at the top had our first taste of Bohemian cooking, pronouncing it, except for the coffee, not so much to our liking as the German. To be connoisseurs in coffee seems to be as universal with Americans as it is rare with Englishmen. The Americans proclaimed the coffee of the little Bohemian inn far superior to the chicory mixture they had grown accustomed to in Germany, and even I, who know little about coffee but everything about tea, thought I liked it better. After our luncheon, which, if it had

been much less palatable, we still would have devoured with the appetite which our steep climb and the keen mountain air had furnished us, we left the main road and descended through the rocky gorge of the Kamnitz, which struck me as more picturesque than anything I had seen so far. I'm rather keen on the beauties of nature as well as on music, though I trust I'm not given to gush about either. But this gorge seemed to me to approach somewhat to my idea of grandeur. When I said something of the kind to Miss Curtis she scoffed at the idea.

"You should see the Yosemite or the Yellowstone," she said, "this is mere stage scenery in comparison."

Nevertheless I was inclined to stick to my admiration, especially after we climbed into little boats and floated down the winding stream, its waters darkened by the rocky heights that frowned on either side. Even when one of the guides pulled a string and let loose a torrent of water that fell in a sheer cascade almost upon our heads, I maintained that the effect was more awe-inspiring than cheaply theatrical, as the others called it.

"Then why were you so terrified?" I demanded of Miss Curtis, who was most vehement in her scoffing, when we were safely past, but had been loudest in her shrieks when we passed almost directly beneath the falling waters. She had the grace to blush, for in her terror or excitement, real or feigned, she had clutched me frantically, and I had done what I thought she expected of me in the way of soothing her terrors.

If we had been gay before, we were almost boisterous after the episode of the waterfall. I would have enjoyed more sympathetic companions as our boat slipped



silently down the dark stream toward Herrnskretschen, but I thought it wise to make the most of the "goods the gods had provided" me, with "lovely Curtis sitting beside me."

Our lunch on top of the Prebischthor had been a light one, and we were quite ready for a substantial tea at Herrnskretschen that we ordered in the pretty pavilion overlooking the Elbe. By this time I was in almost as wild spirits as my companions, for a day spent in the open with a pretty girl who is making a determined set for one will loosen even the rigid bonds that bind an Englishman's spirit. I was behaving, therefore, no better than the rest of the party—if my voice was not quite so strident as theirs, that was only because I had the luck to be born in a softer climate—when I took my seat beside Miss Curtis at the little table overlooking the Elbe.

I paid her some foolish compliment as I sat down, for which she rewarded me with a conscious smile, and glance, and blush. I looked up from her pretty face, rosy and simpering, to meet the grave eyes of Beatrice gazing directly into mine. She was seated only a few tables away, between the Baron and Baronin von Kempner and opposite to Miss Martin.

In a moment I was covered with confusion, and felt the hot tide pumping from my heart to my brain. How had she come there! Had she dropped from the skies! Then she had not left Dresden!—Neither would I leave it.

In a moment, also, my companions, who hitherto had seemed to me merely pleasantly gay, struck me as hor-

ribly vulgar and common, their high-pitched voices insufferably rude and loud. Moreover, I was quite sure Beatrice had been a witness to Miss Curtis' simpering blushes and would rightly construe them as the effect of some soft flattery on my part. If I had ever held any place in her esteem, however slight, I had surely lost it now.

I had bowed as my eyes met Beatrice's, and she had returned my greeting, but without the beaming cordiality that had distinguished her greeting from the carriage when I encountered it in the Altmarkt. My bow had attracted Miss Curtis' attention; she boldly turned her head to see, as she phrased it, "who I was flirting with." How could I ever for a moment have thought her anything but what she was,—a rude, ill-mannered provincial of the common type!

"My, but she's a stunner!" ejaculated Miss Curtis in tones she took no pains to lower and which I felt sure would carry as far as Beatrice's table. "Who are the guys with her?"

I was in an agony of uneasiness and shame, but indignation began to get the better of both.

"I do not know whom you designate as guys," I answered with, I hoped, freezing politeness of tone. "The people at the opposite table are the Baron and Baronin von Kempner with some American friends."

I would not tell her Beatrice's name, and I let her conjecture, if she cared to, that it was the Germans who were my friends.

"I knew the girl was an American," Miss Curtis answered, with a self-conscious simper. "When you see a

particularly pretty and stylish girl on the continent, you can 'bet-cher-life' she 'll turn out to be an American."

I wondered if Miss Curtis was a fair type, if all Americans have such an overweening opinion of their own beauty and charms.

"Miss Curtis should know," I murmured, nastily; "no one can be a better judge of beauty and style than the preëminent possessor of both."

From that moment I am sure Miss Curtis began to detest me, as she had every reason to do. She colored with mortification or anger.

"Oh, law! you need n't be so sarcastic, Mr. Hatfield. Go and talk to your friends if you want to," and she tossed her head in airy defiance.

"Thank you, I will," I answered, stung by her implication, for I had had no idea of daring to do so. And then, in a moment, I was ashamed of myself. I was showing myself quite as ill-bred as the pretty American.

"I will only just speak to them, Miss Curtis," I added, and I realized that they were the first pleasant words I had spoken since I had discovered Beatrice's presence. "I think they will expect that much of me."

But I'm not sure that they expected it. Beatrice was kind, as I am convinced she would have been had I been the least desirable of acquaintances, but I thought there was a quality of aloofness in her kindness that had not been noticeable on that memorable evening when I walked home with her from the Brühlsche Terrasse. Miss Martin was a little more forbidding than she had been during our first encounter, while the baron responded

to my introduction to him with just the amount of cordiality, but no more, that courtesy to a stranger demanded. The baronin was quite distantly polite.

"We thought you had left town, had probably gone home to Hatfield Abbey," said Miss Martin, with grim pleasantry. "We have not met you anywhere in the haunts of fashion recently."

"No," I countered boldly. "I have been lingering in town hoping to receive that invitation you half-promised me."

A little twinkle in the corner of her eye betrayed that she appreciated my parry and thrust, but I also think she was a little embarrassed. She turned hastily to the baronin.

"Mr. Hatfield refers to the fact that he saved Beatrice and me from much annoyance last Tuesday evening on the Brühl's Terrace. I told him then that I would speak to you and ask you to send him an invitation to call; it was a courtesy due him, I thought. But he failed to leave any address, and I concluded he did not care for the invitation."

The baronin looked at me with polite interrogation in her handsome blue eyes. I replied to the look quickly:

"Indeed, Gnädige Baronin, I cared very much. I do not know how I could have been so forgetful, but I have hoped every day that I would meet Miss Martin and Miss Ludlow in the museum or at the opera, and thus retrieve my mistake. So far I have looked in vain. May I give you my card now?"

"It is not necessary, since I can deliver my invitation in person," she answered coldly. "Of course we will be happy to have you call, since Miss Martin wishes it."

"I 'm not sure she wishes it," I answered, smiling defiance at the grim Miss Martin, "but she thinks it 'my due.' "

"Oh, no," interposed Beatrice hastily. "Miss Martin wishes it very much, I 'm sure, and so do I."

"Any friend of Miss Martin's will always be welcome," said the baron with labored politeness.

I bowed my acknowledgments all round and murmured my thanks, but I had the audacity to smile straight into Beatrice's eyes, and had the good fortune to receive a small, friendly smile in return. I did not feel myself any too welcome at the baron's table, so I made my brief adieus and escaped as quickly as possible to Miss Curtis and the refuge of her none too agreeable comments.

I could not call that evening at the Baronin von Kempner's, as I should have liked to do, since formal calls are not made in the evening in Germany, but as early the next afternoon as I thought etiquette permitted I called at the villa and sent up my cards to the baron, the baronin, Miss Martin, and Miss Ludlow. It was the baronin alone who responded to the cards.

"I am very sorry, Herr Hatfield," she said, as soon as the first formal greetings were over. "Your friends left Dresden on the morning train. They found a telegram awaiting them yesterday on their return from the Boehmischer Schweiz, calling them away immediately to meet some friends from America. Miss Martin asked me to say to you, should I see you, that she was sorry after all that we had not taken your address so that she could have sent you word and saved you a futile errand."

I wanted to ask the baronin where they had gone,

and even beg for their address so that I might send them my regrets, but I did not quite dare. I lingered a few minutes, partly because I thought courtesy to the baronin demanded it, but more because I hoped either she would happen to mention their destination or I would muster courage to ask for it.

But nothing happened and I was forced to go back to my pension, reviling myself all the way as a stupid blunderer for not having given them my address a second time, and I took the early morning train next day for Leipzig.

## CHAPTER III

### AT FRAU PASTOR BERNHOF'S

I HAD taken the slow train for Leipzig, partly because it was cheaper, but partly, also, because it left earlier and I was in a great hurry to be gone from Dresden. I was glad I had taken it when I found that it gave me full three hours of uninterrupted musing—thought, I called it, but it was hardly that. I had been foolish enough to lose my head over a pretty face—I would not call it losing my heart, for I had seen Beatrice but three times, and on only one occasion had I had any conversation with her. I liked her face; I liked her voice—not at all an English one, but with sweet and rich southern inflections—and I liked what I had seen of her ways; they showed breeding and a certain familiarity with world usage. But that was absolutely all I knew about her. As to her character and disposition, she might be a liar and a vixen for all I knew to the contrary. I was an idiot to waste a thought or a regret on her.

Yet I wasted many of both. It had set in to rain after leaving Dresden, a steady drizzle from a leaden sky that soon turned the whole world sodden and gray. The weather in Dresden, during the three weeks I had spent there, had been almost uniformly fine. I was now to make the acquaintance of North-German winter weather,

—damp, cold, of a penetrating rawness that is almost worse than our own abominable winter climate. There was nothing outside to fix my attention as we rolled through the dull, rain-washed landscape. Soaked leaves, already dead or dying, hung despondently from blackened limbs, pools showed black and shining in the brown grass of the meadows, and the patient Holsteins stood fetlock deep in the marshy pastures, their backs turned to the penetrating northeast wind blowing straight from the Baltic. I had secured the window-seat, but there was nothing to attract me outside and I closed my eyes, only to have a vision of brown eyes, merry and serious, a slow engaging smile, and to hear a voice like the thrush in the woods at Hatfield Abbey.

My train took a little more than three hours to traverse the seventy-four miles between Dresden and Leipzig—time enough to indulge in the luxury of idle dreams and to resolutely rouse myself from them to a contemplation of my future. It was still raining drearily when I stepped from the train at the station. I had left my umbrella at my Dresden pension. I knew nothing of Leipzig, there was nothing for it but to indulge in the extravagance of a cab by the hour while I looked up Baedeker's starred list of pensions.

Why I should have decided upon rooms in the Königs-Platz with a comfortable pension on the étage below I do not know, unless fate was again taking a hand in my affairs. Certainly I had seen other rooms as good and other pensions as attractive during the course of my rounds. But had I selected one of them, I might have missed Beatrice among the thousands of young people that throng the streets of Leipzig when university and



conservatory are in full swing, and this story would never have been written.

No; I would have seen her, as my story will show, but whether I should ever have dared to claim from her more than the recognition due any mere acquaintance, I am not sure. However, the fates were kinder to me than I deserved.

I had been in Leipzig three weeks and I had not altogether wasted my time. I had made my calls of etiquette, had registered for my desired lectures, and had commenced the course of reading I had laid out for myself. The university library was an enticing spot to one who loved to browse among books, and I might have been in danger of neglecting health and the exercise its preservation demands, except for the imperative call of the two o'clock dinner-hour. I shall always think it an ungodly hour for dinner, but it has some saving graces to its credit. It compels a cessation from all labor for at least two hours, since shops, banks, libraries, and every other activity are closed from one-thirty to three-thirty, and it breaks the nerve strain of long hours of application.

My arrangement with the landlady of the pension on the étage below me was that she should provide me with dinner seven days in the week, at a fixed charge. My breakfast I could prepare for myself in my own rooms, and supper could be secured anywhere and at any hour that proved most convenient. If I desired to have supper at the pension, I was to notify my landlady at the dinner-hour, and I would be charged a mark and a half for it. I was not long in discovering, however, that few, if any, of our pensionaires took supper with her;

that, indeed, not many German students indulged in that unnecessary meal. A sandwich and a stein of beer in some rathskeller after the theater, or a biscuit and cognac in some trinkhalle, where one sat with one's friends and drank bruderschaft until two in the morning, seemed to amply suffice for supper. Dinner was the one substantial meal of the day, though what with early coffee, and ten o'clock coffee and a sandwich, snatched anywhere on the street, and five o'clock coffee with sweets at a friend's house or at a café, there was never any danger from overfasting.

My landlady had two attractive daughters. One was fair and the other dark. The dark one was the prettier, but the fair one the more amiable; either one might prove dangerous to a susceptible young fellow whose heart was ready to be caught on the rebound. Around the dinner-table sat an assorted lot of young men from all quarters of the globe: a Pole, a Swede, a Frenchman, a German, a Rumanian, and I, an Englishman. All except the German were students in the university. The German was a Herr Geheimrath, a man of some importance, I could see, in the eyes of the landlady's pretty daughters. My new landlady, like my landlady in Dresden, was a sweet-faced "Frau Pastor." She and her daughters were well educated and well-read, and having come from Hanover, they spoke their native German with true Hanoverian accent, and treated with scorn the harsh and slovenly Saxon speech of Leipzig.

If the young Herr Geheimrath rather overawed the naïve fräuleins by the dignity of his office, I could see that the Pole fascinated them by his quick wit and

gallantry, that they were enchanted by the beauty of the Rumanian—he was small and graceful of figure, with exquisite coloring and the perfect features of an intaglio gem—and that they were completely captivated by the Swede, big, of a dazzling fairness, soft and white and pink as a baby. Only the Frenchman and the Englishman came in for none of their coquettish wiles; they treated us politely, but evidently we made but little impression upon them. Whether the Frenchman felt this or not, I could not tell, but I confess I experienced some slight twinges of chagrin that I should be so entirely ignored by two fairly attractive young women.

This, then, was the personnel of my pension, and by the time my first three weeks of residence drew to a close I had begun to feel fairly at home. I sat beside the motherly Frau Bernhof, who did her best to atone for the scant courtesy of her daughters, and the Frenchman and I had grown quite chummy. After dinner he sometimes went up with me to my rooms and waited for the four o'clock lecture, which we both attended. The interval of waiting and the walk to the Augusteum afterward gave us ample opportunity for talks which in the nature of youth grew semi-confidential in time.

It was I who one day broached the topic of the Fräuleins Bernhof and the slight esteem in which they seemed to hold us. The Frenchman laughed.

"I don't understand why they are so impervious to your charms," he said. "As for me, I have no doubt they believe me to be a Jew,—since the Dreyfus affair Germans think all Frenchmen are Jews,—or else they believe me to be a spy and that my university course is mere pretense. I suppose that it is hard for any Ger-

man to understand why a Frenchman should exchange Paris and the Sorbonne for Saxony and the University of Leipzig."

"I rather wonder at it myself," I ventured.

He threw me a quick glance that betrayed suspicion, but evidently my countenance reassured him.

"I might say the same of you," he returned pleasantly. "Is there anything here that you could not get at Oxford, or anything in Saxony that England has not to offer?"

"I suppose we both wanted to learn the German tongue and study the German people. That was my idea, at least, but I also wanted to hear Lamprecht, particularly this course of his on the diplomacy of the 'sixties and 'seventies. It may be of use to me in my profession."

"What is your profession?" he asked quickly.

"I have none as yet. But if I can prepare myself and get a post, I hope to make it diplomacy."

"That's mine, also. I hope we'll be accredited to the same court some day."

He spoke with a cordiality that won me, and from that moment I think we both felt that there was a bond of sympathy between us. We had elected much the same courses, his rooms were in the neighborhood, and we naturally fell into walking together to and from the Augusteum, dropping into each other's rooms at odd hours, and spending frequent evenings together discussing German philosophy and German politics in some pleasant rathskeller with our steins of Pilsener before us. Eventually there came a time when, after the friendly German fashion, we drank bruderschaft to-

gether. But that was after weeks of acquaintance had slowly ripened into friendship. During the interval there were many occasions when the suspicion that had flashed into my mind when I said to him that I wondered at his preferring Leipzig to Paris recurred to me.

Marcel de Villa Réal was the Frenchman's name. Mingled with all the frank charm of his manner was also something of mystery. He knew all about my family, while I knew little or nothing of his. His name sounded fantastic enough to be an assumed one, as much Spanish as French, while mine was a good old English one, easily found in the annals of England's history. But what puzzled me most was that at regularly recurring intervals he disappeared for a few days. He always reported, on his reappearance, that he had been making pilgrimages to towns of note in the vicinity, and talked glibly of Weimar and Jena, and of the famous battle-fields of Rossbach and of Lutzen, both nearby; of Wittenberg, Göttingen, and Halle, of Eisenach and the Horselberg,—all places I wanted to see and would have been glad to visit with so congenial a companion. But though I hinted, delicately, that I would be glad to accompany him on some of these trips, my hints were ignored; I never received the hoped-for invitation and never knew where or when he was going until he had returned.

These things gave me some moments of uneasiness, but I decided at last to ignore them, to accept de Villa Réal as he appeared on the surface, and to enjoy without questioning those qualities of mind and heart I had

proved in him and that made him the most delightful of companions.

I had been three weeks in this environment. My acquaintance with de Villa Réal was already beginning to ripen into friendship, and I had made some progress in my acquaintance with the Rumanian and the Pole, though but little with the other men at the table and none at all with the two fräuleins, when that happened which changed my commonplace pension into a paradise and converted the dinner-hour into an hour of enchantment, eagerly longed for through the remaining hours of the twenty-four.

The university had been open for about a week when at dinner one day our landlady informed the table that two ladies had been in that morning to look at her vacant rooms, and had engaged them. They were stopping at the Hotel Hauße, but would come to the pension the following day.

This announcement created a small stir of excitement.

"Are they pretty?" asked the Pole. "Are they young?" asked the Rumanian. "Are they Germans?" asked Herr Geheimrath.

"Wait till you see," was all the answer Frau Pastor would give us.

I had almost forgotten the incident next day, but while brushing my hair and looking after my hands and nails in preparation for dinner, I suddenly remembered and gave an extra touch to both hair and nails. As I entered the dinning-room, stopping at the door to make my formal bow to the Frau Pastor and then to her two daughters successively,—I had discovered this was Ger-

man etiquette,—I became aware that the expected guests had already arrived and were seated with their backs to the entrance door. I went around to take my own seat on the farther side of the table, and stood riveted to the floor, my hand on the back of my chair.

For, facing me and looking up at me, consternation depicted upon one countenance and surprise and I know not what on the other, were the tortoise-shell spectacles of Miss Martin and the merry brown eyes of Beatrice!

## CHAPTER IV

### HERR LAMPRECHT IS SURPRISED

I BECAME aware, after a dazed moment of oblivion to my surroundings, that I was making a spectacle of myself not only before Miss Martin and Beatrice, but before the assembled table, of whose curious glances I gradually became conscious. Feeling the returning blood rush to my temples with very uncomfortable velocity and volume, I bowed formally and took my seat. But something more than a bow was due from me and in the best manner I could muster I expressed my surprise at meeting them, and also my pleasure. They were courteous in turn, but it was the courtesy demanded by the slightest of acquaintances.

Nevertheless, as soon as I could fully recover possession of my mental faculties I decided that this was an opportunity not to be lost. Beatrice was lovelier than I had remembered her, and the gods had thrown her in my way. I would be grateful to the gods and show my appreciation of their goodness to me by doing my best to make myself acceptable to her.

I could see that her beauty had made an instant impression upon the pensionaires, and that I was envied of every man at the table because I had known her before. The Rumanian was looking at her through his long, dark lashes with an open admiration such as he had never bestowed upon the Fräuleins Bernhof; the



Pole was quietly observant, with something of an appraising glance which, since it was entirely unobtrusive, I could not resent; the Swede, an older man studying for some special degree, whom I would have supposed long past the emotional age, could not look at her without the quick crimson flooding his fair face; while the German talked louder and faster than I had heretofore remembered his doing. Only Marcel seemed perfectly at ease, making such pretty speeches as were allowable to a stranger with the gallantry and aplomb native to a Frenchman.

I am not sure the two fräuleins were quite pleased with the sensation their new pensionaire was creating; they were in danger not only of having to share the attentions heretofore accorded them, but of losing them altogether. Fräulein Marta, who sat at the foot of the table opposite her mother, wore a rather painful smile on her good-humored face, and Fräulein Elsa, who sat at her sister's right, turned to the Pole and said something disagreeably sarcastic. I sat next to the Pole, but her tones were low and I did not quite catch what she said, although I recognized the sarcastic inflections of her voice and caught enough to know that she was intimating that the Pole was suddenly and remarkably taken with the little American. But she had tackled the wrong person when she attempted to browbeat Mr. Witkowski. He turned and answered her in perfect English, though Fräulein Elsa had spoken in German and I had never heretofore heard him speak in any other tongue.

"Yes, Fräulein Elsa." His voice was not raised above the conventional tone but was clear-cut and penetrating, so that every one at the table involuntarily

stopped to listen. "You are right; I have the greatest admiration for America and for everything American, particularly for American women."

I glanced at Fräulein Elsa. A little tongue of angry color was flaming in her cheek and angry darts were flashing from her black eyes at the imperturbable Mr. Witkowski. I could not refrain from glancing at Beatrice, also, for she must have heard him. There was a little color in the smooth ivory of her cheeks, too, and although she was pretending not to have heard, I felt sure that she had. An amused smile that she was unable entirely to suppress dimpled the corners of her mouth as she turned to make a too elaborately careless remark to Miss Martin. Moreover, I caught, later, an interested glance covertly directed at the Pole. I was angry with her. I thought she should have resented his speech, so evidently intended for her ears, as an impertinence, but I suppose it is not in human nature, in a woman's nature at least, not to enjoy a small triumph like that, and not to feel some interest in the latest victim of her charms.

I had not until this moment regretted that there was no salon in Frau Bernhof's pension. In Dresden it was a universal custom for the pensionaires to drift into the handsome salon after each meal, and it did not take long to become more or less well acquainted where there were opportunities for conversation in cozy corners. Here, if one wished to linger after a meal, one might do so in the dining-room, redolent of fried cabbage and roast veal, and noisy with the clatter of dishes being removed to the kitchen quarters. I had not heretofore felt any desire to linger; now I would have found some excuse for

drawing Beatrice into a window embrasure—there were three of them comfortably cushioned—and attempt to discover what had brought her to Leipzig. Rather, I would have given much to have had an opportunity to get back on that friendly footing of our one evening in Dresden. I really cared little for what had brought her to Leipzig, so long as she was there and in my pension. No doubt she had come to study music at the famous conservatory; I only hoped her course would keep her there as long as I stayed.

But I had no such opportunity. The two Americans excused themselves from the table before the rest of us, and no sooner were they safely behind their own closed doors than I was assailed with a fusillade of curious questions. Where had I known them? What was the relationship between the two? Were they rich? And many more of those frank questions Germans do not hesitate to ask.

The questions were intermingled with many comments on Beatrice's beauty and style.

"Miss Ludlow is very beautiful, do you not think so, Herr Hatfield?" enquired Fräulein Marta.

I was saved from answering by Fräulein Elsa's unamiable: "Yes, if you like the American style."

"I do like it extremely," Herr Witkowski interposed, with that little, biting clip in his voice that hardly sounded amiable. Evidently there was friction between him and Fräulein Elsa, caused, perhaps, by his too evident admiration of Miss Ludlow. They were the first words I had heard Mr. Witkowski utter after the departure of the Americans. He and the Rumanian had main-

tained a discreet silence, and I liked them for it. They alone had shown no curiosity about the strangers.

To escape from the persecution—it amounted to that—of my cross-questioning, I made haste to excuse myself from the table. How I wished now that I had been in the habit of taking my suppers at the pension—then I should have seen Beatrice again in a few hours. But to begin now would too palpably disclose my motive to the carping Elsa.

I was early at dinner next day, and as Miss Martin and Beatrice were also early, I had the pleasure of exchanging a few words with them with no other listener than the silent Swede. I was not sure that he understood English, but I was not going to let any such fear deter me from making the speech I had carefully prepared.

“I was more disappointed than I can express to you, Miss Martin, to have missed you the second time.”

“I am sure not seeing *me* must have been a disappointment, Mr. Hatfield,” said the grimly cynical Miss Martin. “The baronin told you why we left so unceremoniously!”

“Yes; and I supposed you had returned to America with your friends. Imagine my surprise and pleasure at this unexpected meeting.”

I spoke to Miss Martin, but I glanced at Beatrice as I spoke. She was not looking at me. Instead she was looking rather anxiously at the Swede, as if she feared he might overhear and draw unwarranted conclusions. I glanced at him, also, but his face was an impenetrable mask.

“Wholly unexpected,” said Miss Martin in reply to

me, and with grim emphasis on the "wholly." "And what brings you to Leipzig, Mr. Hatfield?"

It was as if she questioned my right to be in the same town with Beatrice. There was no reason for it, but I felt as if I must apologize. Moreover, I feared if she knew I was going to be here any length of time, she would take her charge away. I hastened to say:

"I am taking a brief course of lectures at the university."

I wanted to add, "And you?" but was saved that impertinence by the entrance of the Pole and the Rumanian. Almost at the same moment Frau Pastor and her two daughters came in from the kitchen entrance. They were in time to witness the impressive bows of the two men, the Rumanian's expression of naïve delight as his eyes rested on Beatrice, and the Pole's more sophisticatedly veiled, yet unmistakable look of admiration. I began to fear there might be an uncomfortable time in store for Beatrice at the pension; but there was no evidence of anything but the most cordial good-humor in the greeting of the three women to the two Americans. I decided that after all they were a good sort, or, possibly, the Frau Pastor had been drilling her daughters.

This was the afternoon of Herr Lamprecht's lecture. It was a six o'clock lecture, the last of the day. Although the winter solstice was still two months away, it was growing dark at six o'clock, especially on those gray days which I had already discovered were largely in the majority at Leipzig. By seven, when the lecture was over, the midnight would be no darker.

Marcel had been up in my room for a cup of tea. Though not as dependent on his tea as an Englishman, he was glad to be "fortified," he said, for one of Lamprecht's difficult-to-follow lectures. I always had the wherewithal—tea, bread, butter, and jam, and a loaf of what the Germans call "English cake"—and was more than glad to share my solitary meal with so congenial a companion. As we walked over to the Augusteum after tea, Marcel for the first time broached the topic of the Americans.

"So you know them well and like them immensely?" he queried.

"Not well," I answered. "I knew them slightly in Dresden, and I like them. Is there any reason why I should not?"

"Certainly none. Only—beware of Americans!"

"Why? You speak as one who has had experience. Have you suffered?"

"Not seriously. But I know they do not hesitate to draw you on and turn you down when the time arrives. I now find them amusing and entertaining, but I do not allow myself to find them anything more. You Englishmen, I think, take such things more seriously than we do; hence my warning."

"Thank you," I said stiffly. "It is unnecessary, I believe."

Marcel glanced at me with an amused smile that naturally irritated me. He saw my irritation and hastened to make amends.

"Come, Hugh," he said, using my given name for the first time, "we won't quarrel over Miss Ludlow. As for

me, I have learned to prefer the French demoiselles when it comes to a serious question, though, as a matter of fact, I believe my fate has been settled for me by my elders—I don't have to worry about it. You English ought to try our plan. You don't know what a comfort it is."

"It suits a Frenchman, no doubt," I responded, easily restored to good-humor, "though I believe I like our own better. But tell me about her."

Which he proceeded to do, and we were still talking of "Mademoiselle Feronce" when we arrived at the brilliantly lighted Augusteum, with just two minutes to spare.

As we hurried through the Aula, we noticed a group of students gathered around the memorial statue to those who fell in 1870. There seemed to be some excitement among them.

"What do you suppose has happened?" asked Marcel, as we ran up the steps to the upper corridor where Lamprecht's lecture-room was located.

I did not know, but as we came into the corridor leading to our lecture-room, we found the usual crowds gathered around the door awaiting the professor's arrival, some of them gathered into knots talking excitedly. Every nation of the civilized world was represented in that crowd, and as we came up an excitable Italian called out to us:

"Did you see them?"

"Who?" we asked in concert.

"The signora and the signorina. Adorable!"

"I never knew women to elect Lamprecht's lectures before," grumbled a spectacled German.

"By Gad she 's a winner!" exclaimed a young American, quite as excitedly as the Italian had spoken. "If she turns out to be one of my countrywomen, as I think she will, I 'll be proud of her."

Marcel glanced at me significantly, but I am of slower wits than the Frenchman and I did not understand his look.

Some one gave the signal that Herr Lamprecht had appeared at the far end of the corridor, and we all rushed in noisily to take our places. We were barely seated—in the rush I had not thought of looking for the two women, it seemed to me a small matter to create such excitement—when the professor came striding in. He always made a spectacular entrance, often being half-way through the opening sentence of his lecture before he had reached his desk. Now, as he ran up the steps of his little platform, he took off his hat with a wide swing, threw it on to his desk and began:

"Meine Herren—"

He stopped, looked up at the top of the room with wide, startled eyes, and added hesitatingly,

"Und Damen."

Every man in the room turned in his seat to look at the two women. I turned with them.

There, almost at the very top of the room, looking at the professor through her tortoise-shell spectacles, sat Miss Martin, and by her side, with downcast eyes and color steadily rising under the battery of smiling glances turned toward her, but with otherwise impassive face—sat Beatrice!



## CHAPTER V

### A NEW PUPIL FOR HERR LAMPRECHT

**S**O it was not the conservatory that had brought Beatrice to Leipzig. Who would have thought of a fluffy little creature like that studying in a German university and electing the most difficult course in the curriculum! I was half inclined to be angry with her; certainly I was annoyed and irritated. Did she not know that to elect Herr Lamprecht's course was to make herself unnecessarily conspicuous and the victim of many a ribald German jest? Never before in the history of the university had a woman appeared upon those sacred benches. No doubt Herr Lamprecht himself was the most dismayed and probably indignant man in the room at her unwarranted appearance there.

I would have liked to lay the flattering unction to my soul that Beatrice had elected Lamprecht's course because I had done so, but by no ransacking of my memory could I recall that I had ever mentioned his name in her presence. Perhaps it was Miss Martin who had arranged her lectures for her and selected the stiffest course as a kind of discipline. She looked the martinet or the stern pedagogue; no doubt it was her doing.

At dinner the next day, however, I discovered otherwise. Of course I mentioned having seen them at the university, and asked if they were members of the class,

or merely visitors. It was to Miss Martin I addressed my question.

"No," she answered grimly; "unfortunately we are members. That is to say, Miss Ludlow is; I can't make head or tail of his outlandish gibberish. But since his lecture comes so late, I have to go along as chaperone. I tried my best to dissuade Beatrice from joining the class when I understood we would be the only women in it, but she said that Herr Lamprecht had been her one reason for choosing Leipzig, and it would ruin her course to give him up."

Beatrice was talking to Marcel—he was saying all the polite things about how pleased he was to find her a member of the class which I could not bring myself to utter—and so, I suppose, she did not hear Miss Martin's explanation.

"Were n't you rather gratified by the attention you received from the class?" I asked Miss Martin, and knew it was nasty of me.

"Very!" she answered grimly. "But I told Beatrice we couldn't expect 'manners' from a lot of barbarians."

"I hope you don't include me among the barbarians, Miss Martin?"

"Not if you did n't turn around in your seat to look and grin. I don't know whether you did or not, for I did n't know you were in the class. Neither did Beatrice, I suppose, for she never mentioned you."

"Oh, yes, I did," said Beatrice, turning quickly from Marcel. "I saw Mr. Hatfield when he came in. But he did n't have to turn in his seat, because he sits on a side bench."

Many times during that term I was glad I sat on the

side, but there were a few times when I was sorry. I could note all that was happening to Beatrice without noticeably turning my head or apparently withdrawing my attention from the lecturer, and though what I saw was not always pleasing to me, I was, as a rule, glad to keep informed of these happenings. For, as day after day of those dreary German skies passed over my head, I found myself more and more hopelessly engrossed by thoughts of Beatrice. I had not yet decided that I was in love with her, but I found her terribly distracting. I had half a mind, at times, to cut loose from Leipzig altogether and go to Berlin for the rest of my lectures. But had I really tried to cut loose, I know now that I would have found myself firmly and inextricably bound in the meshes of an attachment stronger than my will.

Nor was I the only one. It was more and more evident that the Pole and the Rumanian were growing deeply interested in her. She talked most to the Pole, opposite whom she sat, but the Rumanian looked at her with his heart in his beautiful eyes.

I sometimes felt sorry for Herr Lubella, the Rumanian. He and Mr. Witkowski had apparently been great friends when I first arrived at the Pension Bernhof, but Mr. Witkowski was a brilliant talker and Herr Lubella was not. Mr. Witkowski had not only the wit and gallantry we usually attribute to a Frenchman; he had also a caustic humor native to the Slav, and that I could see particularly appealed to Beatrice because in its peculiar rapier-like keenness of flash and at the same time genial warmth of glow, if one can understand the combination of such contrasting characteristics, it

seemed to her more like that American humor she knew and loved in her compatriots. More than once I have heard her say, apropos of some speech whose quick wit I did not quite follow:

"If I did not know better, I should take you for an American, Mr. Witkowski." I always supposed, and so I am sure did Mr. Witkowski, that in so speaking she was paying him the highest compliment in her power.

Conversation at table was always in German, except when Witkowski or Marcel, who were fluent in English, talked to Miss Martin. Either she could not, or she would not, speak German, but I am not sure that she did not understand it pretty well. Several times I surprised either a knowing twinkle or a steely glint in her eyes when the Pole was saying something particularly witty or something verging on the audacious to Beatrice. He was always extremely courteous to Miss Martin. Perhaps it was part of his method to cultivate the good-will of the chaperone or perhaps Poles are courteous by nature and breeding to older people.

As I said, conversation at table was usually carried on in German, but occasionally Mr. Witkowski slipped into English when talking with Beatrice, and I wondered whether this was to annoy Herr Lubella. Certainly it was a severe trial to the Rumanian. I think he was suspicious of Witkowski at such times, fearing that he was saying something to Beatrice a little too tender for the ears of the table. He need not have been. There were Miss Martin and I—Miss Martin, I am confident, was every whit as keen as I—ready to show our displeasure had he said anything out of the way. But so far as I overheard his speeches they were all along the

line of the lightest and most frivolous flirtation, though so cleverly done and uttered with such wit and good-humor that I did not wonder at any girl finding him fascinating.

Between the Rumanian and the Pole I had little chance to talk to Beatrice at table, and heretofore I had had no chance elsewhere. What I considered was a very clever idea on my part struck me one day, and I hastened at once to put it into execution. Lingered after dinner, I had an interview with Frau Bernhof.

"I have decided," I told her, "that my health demands a more regular hour and place for supper. On what terms will you provide me with supper by the week?"

There was a demure twinkle in Frau Bernhof's mild, blue eyes, and the half-smile on her placid face embarrassed me woefully. I felt the blood rushing to my temples and would have given much to avoid Fräulein Elsa's mischievous glance as the good Frau Pastor stated her terms. But there was no help for it. The plunge had been made, and though I more than half regretted it and would have liked to withdraw, the Frau Pastor's exceedingly moderate terms supplied me with no excuse.

It was with a good deal of trepidation that I presented myself at the supper-table that evening and met the surprised glance of Beatrice, the grimly disapproving one of Miss Martin, the teasing smiles of the two fräuleins, and the annoyed frown of—the Rumanian! There he was, snugly seated beside Beatrice, and the two were chattering away as I had never heard them at dinner. Little had I gained by the strategic move that had cost

me no small mortification; it was only an exchange of the Pole for the Rumanian. Moreover, when I discovered during the course of their lively chatter that he had walked home from the university with her after a class which they both attended, and had been invited into her sitting-room for a cup of tea, I was chagrined enough. I excused myself before the meal was over, and in my rather cheerless room on the *étage* above, striding the floor restlessly, reviled myself as a simpleton of the first degree. I would go no more to supper; I would think no more of Beatrice. She was probably one of those silly American girls, pleased by the attentions of every foreigner, be he Teuton or Slav, but chary enough of her favors to one of her own Saxon blood.

However, I reconsidered my determination not to go to supper. At dinner I had been practically reduced to the society of the mildly interesting Frau Pastor and the grimly forbidding Miss Martin, since the others absorbed Beatrice. Therefore I determined hereafter to devote myself to them in earnest, and prove to my fellow pensionaires that I was something more than the intellectual stick I had heretofore—whether from indifference or because of my natural British clannishness—shown myself to be.

I had recently been reading Bismarck's "Thoughts and Reminiscences" and was full of it, half admiration, half indignation. I would vent both at table. Frau Pastor, who was a Prussian, naturally idolized the great chancellor; Herr Geheimrath, being a Saxon, was able to qualify his praise with criticism; the Swede was astute and said little, but that little was much to the point; and Miss Martin, somewhat to my surprise and greatly

to my delight, was as frankly horrified at some of his revelations as any Briton could have been. The Swede and Herr Geheimrath belonged at our end of the table, and neither of them had much chance for a word with Beatrice, though both of them looked at her, the Swede sometimes with an expression in his eyes that I disliked extremely, a horrible, appraising expression.

The discussion grew warm between the six of us, carried on in halting English by the Swede and the Saxon, and in fluent English by Marcel and the Frau Pastor, out of deference to Miss Martin. Much to my gratification I saw Beatrice's attention gradually diverted from the brilliant Pole. Soon she was openly an interested listener to our discussion, and before long she had joined in it with a quiet but telling contribution of her own. I redoubled my efforts. Not until dinner was over should this discussion end, and, if possible, it should be made so interesting that the Pole would find no chance to recapture her attention. I quoted Bernhardi:

"Bernhardi says that Prince Bismarck repeatedly declared before the German Reichstag that no one should ever take upon himself the immense responsibility of intentionally bringing about a war, but that he did not always act accordingly to the strict letter of that speech; and that it is his special claim to greatness that at the decisive moment he did not lack the boldness to begin a war on his own initiative."

"Oh, *Bernhardi!*" exclaimed Miss Martin petulantly. "Don't quote him to *me!* He says that *we*, the United States, have risen to be an industrial and commercial power of the first rank simply because of our abundant

natural resources and the *unscrupulously pushing character of our inhabitants!*”

I laughed. Miss Martin's comically indignant air was irresistible. Beatrice laughed, too.

“Miss Martin can't stand Bernhardi's opinion of us, and it is certainly far from complimentary,” she said, half-apologetically. “He says pacific ideals are not our real motive when we advocate arbitration. We employ the need of peace as a cloak under which to promote our political aims; that it is not a real love of peace that prompts us to try to conclude treaties for the establishment of arbitration courts, but it is our ‘commercial instincts’ that lead us to try to make such treaties; and the proof of it is that we have only tried to make them with the powerful nations, and have completely passed over those weaker ones that are in the greatest need of international protection.”

“Yes,” chimed in Miss Martin, “and he says it's the American ‘plutocrats’ who want treaties of peace to further their own interests. In one breath he despises us for our ‘commercial instincts,’ as the real cause of our desire for peace, and in another claims that the Germans are born business men, more than any others in the world; and that one cause of their love of peace is the wish not to be disturbed in their commercial life. Oh consistency, thou art a jewel!”

Miss Martin's lip curled in fine scorn.

“But what annoys me most,” said Beatrice, evidently in complete sympathy with Miss Martin, “is his arrogant claim of every virtue among the Germans, allowing none to any other nation. He says that the German love of peace is partly due to a characteristic peculiar



to Germans. Here are his exact words: 'Our aim is to be just and we strangely imagine that all other nations with whom we exchange relations share this aim. We are always ready to consider the peaceful assurances of foreign diplomacy and of the foreign press to be no less genuine and true than our own ideas of peace.' He denies us every noble trait, every chivalrous feeling."

I liked the way Beatrice looked; her merry, brown eyes were stormy with indignation.

"And we Americans pride ourselves on a love of justice, of chivalry, of fair play," she added, catching my eye and speaking directly to me.

"I believe you do," I said quickly, foolishly grateful for even so small a crumb of preference, but glowing with a pride of kinship, also, that she should recognize that my Anglo-Saxon blood made it impossible for me to misunderstand her. But in a moment her high look fell.

"Oh, dear Frau Pastor!" she exclaimed quickly. "You must forgive me; I did not think. Of course you are a German and must sympathize with Bernhardi's point of view."

We all turned to the Frau Pastor. Her sweet face was troubled, an unusual color had spread to the roots of her fair hair, and her mild eyes came as near to being wrathful as her eyes could be. Now, as we all noticed her agitation, the good Frau Pastor became confused.

"Oh, no," she said hurriedly. "I understand; it is all quite right."

But of course we did not pursue the argument, if it could be called such. No one at that table would will-

ingly distress the good Frau Pastor, least of all Beatrice, who was all contrition.

I had been the one to introduce the disturbing topic, but I did not regret it. It had served its purpose; it had drawn Beatrice from her tête-à-tête with the Pole and had induced her to bestow a little of her attention upon me. I would have another topic ready for the evening meal that would engage her in general conversation. Perhaps I would even walk home with her and Miss Martin from Herr Lamprecht's lecture. Why not? Did not Herr Lubella walk home with her from lectures?

We left the dining-room together and in the hall, as Beatrice turned toward her room and I toward the corridor door, she bade me a smiling *Auf Wiedersehen*. Had she invited me to tea or to some high function, I could hardly have been more elated. Yes, I would walk home with her from Herr Lamprecht's, and perhaps Marcel would walk on ahead with Miss Martin and leave Beatrice to me. Perhaps, too,—for it would be nearly supper-time when we arrived at the pension—she would invite me into her sitting-room to spend the waiting interval.

With my head filled with such day-dreams, I rushed into Herr Lamprecht's lecture-room with the rest of my class just as the professor came striding down the corridor on the stroke of six. As I fairly ran to my seat on the side bench, I gave one swift glance toward the upper end of the room where Beatrice sat. Yes, there she was and Miss Martin beside her, but on the seat directly behind her sat Herr Lubella, and he had never before appeared in that class!

If any one could make head or tail of the notes I

took that afternoon, he is cleverer than I. I have looked them over since, and they are an unintelligible jumble. I was angry with Lubella, angry with Beatrice, but most angry with myself. Why should I care! It was none of my affair! And then Herr Lamprecht uttered one of his doubtful jokes—he was rather given to *double entendre*—and every man in the class laughed, and almost every man turned in his seat and looked at Beatrice to see if she understood.

I was furious with them; yet I could not forbear slyly glancing at her myself. She was calmly writing in her note-book, apparently oblivious to the hundreds of eyes bent upon her. I could not be sure how well she understood the German vernacular; perhaps Herr Lamprecht's unpleasant witticism had passed harmlessly over her head. I sincerely hoped so. I knew how "squeamish," as the Germans call it, American women are supposed to be, more so even than our English women and far more so than any woman of the continent, and I did not want her to be disgusted or hurt. I was angry with the rudeness of these "foreigners" who did not try to shield rather than annoy a woman. And yet I had to confess that Beatrice made so lovely a picture, sitting there at the top of the room, in the full blaze of the electric lights, her little fur cap with its white wing mingling softly with the shining waves of her hair, and her white lids with their dark fringes resting on her ivory-tinted cheek, I could not wonder that they seized every opportunity to turn in their seats to look at it.

I got through the hour somehow, and by the time it was nearly over had calmed down to the point of deciding that I would still make the attempt to walk home

with Beatrice. I would at least try to get ahead of Lubella. I was ready to spring to my feet the moment Herr Lamprecht uttered his characteristic *Auf Wiedersehen, Meine Herren*, but in the very act of rising, across the heads of the intervening men, I saw Herr Lubella rise swiftly and gracefully, seize Miss Ludlow's coat on the back of her bench, and skilfully assist her into it. I only waited to see him take her note-book from her and the three start to walk out together. Then I turned to Marcel.

"What do you say to taking supper at Auerbach's rathskeller tonight, Marcel?" I asked.

He gave me a swift glance.

"But I thought you were taking your suppers at the pension," he objected.

"Not to-night."

"Do you feel Mephistophelian?"

"Yes; and nothing could be better for me than supper in the company of those old frescoes of *Faust* and *Mephisto*—a homeopathic cure."

"All right, we'll go. Only," he added sympathetically, and somehow I could n't resent his sympathy as I should have done had he been a Briton, "don't let that little cameo-faced Rumanian upset you; he's only a doll, and Miss Ludlow knows it."

## CHAPTER VI

### THE RUMANIAN MEETS A RIVAL

**M**ARCEL might call the Rumanian a "cameo-faced doll," but in my inner consciousness I knew he was unjust. There was much more to Lubella than the beauty of his exterior, or Beatrice would never have wasted her smiles and pleasant words upon him. It had been noticeable that she had wasted neither upon the Swede, who, in the eyes of the Fräuleins Bernhof at least, was a much handsomer man.

In fact I had been inclined to like the Rumanian very well during those three weeks I had known him before the advent of Beatrice. I had found him exceptionally well-informed, as, indeed, are most continental men. I don't know in what way methods of education on the continent differ from ours, but every man seems to be fluent in at least three languages, to be thoroughly familiar with the art treasures of the world, and to know our literature almost as well as he knows his own, quite as well as we know it ourselves. But more than that, they are intelligent on all topics of world interest, and I had had many a friendly argument with Lubella on questions of European politics.

My vanity had been soothed by Marcel's calling the Rumanian a "cameo-faced doll,"—which was, no doubt, his kindly intention,—but a night's sleep put me in a

saner frame of mind. At dinner I was quite ready to welcome him to Herr Lamprecht's class, and if there was any malice in my doing so publicly, I hope it did not appear in my manner.

The Rumanian was only a boy, and his bright blush and swift, half-frightened glance at Beatrice were a boy's naïve way of betraying that he feared the pensionaires—they already had learned that Beatrice was a member of the class—would know what had been the attraction there for him.

I was not surprised at his confusion, since he was so young, but I was a little surprised that there should appear signs of embarrassment on Beatrice's part. I had thought her too much versed in the ways of the world, too thoroughly poised, to be easily thrown off her balance. But while I was a little sorry to have annoyed the Rumanian, I was not at all sorry to annoy Beatrice. Rather, I took a grim delight in it. Why, I wondered?

"Did you enjoy Herr Lamprecht?" I asked Lubella.

"Very much. And I will enjoy him more, I think, when I get used to his rapidity of utterance; he is a little hard to follow."

So he was a fixture, and not a visitor for the afternoon as I had rather hoped.

There had been two or three weeks of Lubella's faithful attendance at the Lamprecht lectures, always occupying the seat behind Beatrice and always springing to his feet the minute the lecture was over to assist her with her wraps—always, too, walking home with Miss Martin and Beatrice, I suppose, though of this I was not certain, since I scorned to spy on them—when there

suddenly appeared in the class another man in whom I was deeply interested.

He came a little late, that first time, just behind Herr Lamprecht himself, and slipped quietly into a seat on the side bench by the door, since the professor, as was his custom, was already in the full flow of his lecture, though he had not yet reached his desk. No man would have had the temerity to advance into that room in search of a seat while Herr Lamprecht was talking.

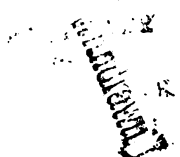
I was across the room from the new arrival, on the bench by the windows, and I saw him when he entered. For a moment I was dazed by the sight of him. I thought at first I must be mistaken. It was impossible that "Siegfried," whom I had left in Dresden still haunting the foyer of the opera, as I supposed, could appear in so tame and dull a spot as a university lecture-room. I should have considered him long since finished with university courses, and I had thought of him in fact, as being in some way attached to the Saxon court. But I could see him very distinctly under the blaze of the electric lights, and a second look convinced me that it was "Siegfried." Had there been other proof wanting, there was the fresh scar on his cheek, no longer concealed by the black court-plaster, that he had no doubt won in Beatrice's service. It did not disfigure him. Very likely, in the eyes of German fräuleins, it added to his manly beauty.

But the sight of this scar reminding me of his evident admiration for Beatrice, a sudden suspicion presented itself that it was Beatrice who had been the lode-star to draw him to Leipzig and Herr Lamprecht's class. I was quickly disabused of this suspicion, however, for I

saw the moment when his eyes fell upon Beatrice, and there was no mistaking the quick start, the widening of the eyes, and the long stare of incredulous surprise. I glanced quickly at Beatrice and was just in time to see her eyes drop swiftly to her note-book, while the slow color mounted to her cheeks. She had seen him, of course, and remembering the impression he had made on her in the Dresden opera-house,—the gay officers, the villainous-looking Southerner, and the modest Englishman might as well have been sticks of wood for all the notice she took of us,—I felt there was no longer any hope for me. Here was no “cameo-faced doll,” nor cynical Pole scintillating with wit, but a foe worthy of the finest steel. If he was about to enter the lists, I might as well give up all pretensions to Beatrice.

Not that I had made any visible ones so far, but I felt that in a way I had been making progress of late. Perhaps my very aloofness had been in my favor; certainly the grim Miss Martin had relaxed her vigilance where I was concerned, though redoubling it, I sometimes thought, in the presence of the Rumanian and the Pole.

I could not forbear wondering what steps “Siegfried” would take to further his acquaintance with Beatrice; that he would take them, I felt sure. Would he, too, become a boarder at the Pension Bernhof? Or would he have the temerity to usurp the Rumanian’s seat and privileges at Herr Lamprecht’s lectures? He did not again come late to class, but he did not change his seat for one more directly in line with the lecturer’s voice. I believed he retained his first seat because it was a post from which he could keep Beatrice under observation without seeming to be unduly watchful.





For five days, at the six o'clock hour, I had kept my eyes on "Siegfried," who, I could see, was quietly watching Beatrice, and she, in turn, was fully aware of his presence and his furtive glances. The morning of the sixth day was also the morning of the Gewandhaus rehearsal. As all the world knows, the Gewandhaus concerts are unsurpassed in the music world. To the concerts themselves we university students had no access, the seats being, as a rule, taken for the season by the Leipzig residents and the aristocracy from the neighboring towns and country-seats. But the morning rehearsals were open to all, and were thronged by the students of the conservatory and the university.

I never missed one of them, but I had never seen Beatrice there. This was not because she was indifferent to music, but because she had some friends living in a grand villa on one of the wide, handsome residence streets, who had a season box and regularly invited Miss Martin and Beatrice to sit with them. I had often discussed these concerts with her, and was delighted to find that we agreed so nearly in our enjoyment of them, often taking special delight in the same movements or in some delicately turned phrase or wonderful exhibition of difficulties in technic successfully overcome by the famous orchestra under its brilliant leader.

I always went early to rehearsals in order to secure a good seat, for none of them were reserved, and on this morning I sat idly watching the throng struggling for places as the opening hour drew near. Suddenly I perceived Miss Martin and Beatrice standing a little back and looking much embarrassed. I suppose they had expected to find reserved seats and ushers, and

they hardly knew how to push their way forward and hunt for seats for themselves. I am always slow to think, though quick enough to act after I have mapped out a line of action. Now I slowly came to the decision that, as I had but one seat to offer, I would ask my neighbor to keep it for me, bring Miss Martin to it, and then secure seats somewhere—in the gallery, if necessary—for Beatrice and myself.

I was thrilled with excitement at the prospect of sitting tête-à-tête for an hour with Beatrice. So I spoke to my neighbor, who promised to keep my seat, and rose to put my plan in execution. But I was a moment too late. As I turned to look for them, I saw "Siegfried" make his way to them through the throng and saw them turn and follow him. I lost sight of them for a few minutes, but I had an idea they would seek the gallery, since nowhere else did there appear to be any vacancies. In a few moments I saw "Siegfried" ushering them into a box, where the three could easily have found seats together. No doubt he counted on the older lady entering first, which would leave him a place beside Beatrice, but Miss Martin, evidently suspecting this scheme, insisted on Beatrice going first, which, of course, would leave him to sit beside the grim duenna. Had I been there, I should have felt compelled to submit, but not so "Siegfried"; he was a man of resource. Bowing as if he would not for a moment presume on occupying the same box, he slipped around to the next one. It was empty, and he took a seat in it close beside Beatrice.

The whole thing was merely pantomime to me, of course, yet I understood as well as if I had been there

to hear, and I could not help smiling over the neat way in which he had outwitted Miss Martin, while mentally gnashing my teeth at the man's swift audacity and my own slow-moving wits. During the intervals between the music I could see that an animated conversation was being carried on between "Siegfried" and Beatrice, but that he also did not neglect Miss Martin. Once I saw him lean past Beatrice and hand his card to Miss Martin, who seemed to take it very amiably.

"There," I said to myself, "the proper introductions have been made; now he has only to sail ahead on a full tide."

I do not know whether he walked back to the pension with Beatrice. The throng was too great in breaking up to keep track of them without making an apparent effort to do so, but I do know that the same afternoon at the Lamprecht lecture, looking for him in his accustomed place, I did not find him. I glanced quickly toward Beatrice to see if I could discover how she was taking his defection. In the seat directly behind her, heretofore occupied by Lubella, sat "Siegfried," and at his side, looking like a small doll indeed by the magnificent "Siegfried," but wearing a dark and portentous frown on his beautiful face, sat the little Rumanian.

I was amused, and also anxious to see what would happen when the lecture was over. I would not have missed it for anything. Scarcely was the last word out of Herr Lamprecht's mouth, and snatching up his hat, an old and battered soft felt, from his desk, he had started on the run down the steps of his little platform toward the door, when I saw the stately German

lean gracefully forward to assist Beatrice with her coat. But the little Rumanian was too quick for him. Diving under the outstretched arms of the German, he seized the coat first, and before he assisted Beatrice into it, turned deliberately to scowl threateningly up at the German.

For one moment the latter looked nonplussed, but he did not return the Rumanian's scowl. With a courtly bow he slipped behind Miss Martin and began the less pleasing task of assisting her into her wraps.

I wanted to shout "Bravo, Herr Lubella!" I admired the quickness and boldness with which the little fellow had defended what he considered his rights, and he won a higher place in my esteem from that moment, though I had to admit that the German had acted the part of the accomplished man of the world and the Rumanian that of the provincial gallant.

I wondered if the little contretemps was annoying to the two women. I could not decide. Beatrice's face was inscrutable, but I believe Miss Martin rather enjoyed it. I thought I detected a twinkling smile struggling for mastery with a grim determination to look sternly forbidding.

## CHAPTER VII

### SOME PLEASANT THINGS HAPPEN

SEVERAL very pleasant things happened to me in the course of the next few days. For one thing I went to supper that evening at the pension, the evening when I had seen "Siegfried" worsted by the Rumanian. I had not been going to supper very regularly, though my suppers were paid for and I was not at that time, as a usual thing, spending my money twice; I was economizing hard. But I was not in an amiable frame of mind toward either the Rumanian or Beatrice, or, for that matter, toward Mr. Witkowski, and I had a childish idea that I might make Beatrice uncomfortable by absenting myself.

Moreover, I was seeing much of Marcel. I believe he was trying to console me for my chagrin at the Rumanian's air of possession in Herr Lamprecht's class, and he was continually persuading me to go off to the theater with him and to supper afterward. I think he was really growing fond of me. I know I was getting to have the true *Bruderschaft* feeling for him.

But on this evening Marcel was not at Lamprecht's class—he was away on one of his mysterious tours, no doubt—and I did not feel like spending a lonely evening. I was also a little curious to see the Ruma-

nian with Beatrice after the encounter with "Siegfried," and I hoped something might come up to reveal the German's name and title, for I was quite sure he had a title.

I was glad I had decided to take supper at the pension, though my advent created something of a sensation, disagreeably emphasized by Fräulein Elsa. Whether to rebuke Lubella for his officiousness at the lecture, or for some other reason, Beatrice was more amiable to me than was her wont. I think she snubbed Lubella, and the poor boy showed he felt it. Whereupon I did my best to cover his mortification by drawing him into our conversation, and he showed more gratitude in his expressive eyes than the occasion seemed to warrant.

It was Miss Martin who gratified my curiosity about "Siegfried."

"Do you remember that night on the Terrasse, Mr. Hatfield," she asked; "when those officers were annoying us?"

Could I ever forget it? But I only answered:

"Perfectly."

"I'm not sure that you noticed a distinguished-looking German who went forward to speak to the officers. I thought he must be some kind of an officer. Do you remember him?"

Of course I remembered him, but I answered hesitatingly, as one trying to recall.

"I think I do."

"Well, it's strange how things turn out. We met that same man this morning at the Gewandhaus concert, and he found seats for Beatrice and me in an upper box. Afterward he introduced himself. He's Baron von

Dreidorf, and he knows our friends in Dresden, the von Kempners."

Miss Martin was certainly short-sighted. Evidently she had not seen the man at Lamprecht's lectures for the last week, keeping close watch on Beatrice. I could not forbear glancing at Beatrice. She met my look with a twinkle in her eyes that was part amusement, part embarrassment, and part conscious guilt. She knew that I knew this was no accidental meeting.

"What is the baron doing here?" I asked Miss Martin.

"Oh, he has come down from Dresden to attend Herr Lamprecht's lectures. Is the Herr Professor so wonderful that all you young people must come from near and far to hear him? I can't understand his gibberish."

"He is wonderful. I'm sorry he speaks too fast for you; you would enjoy him thoroughly," I answered, and fell to pondering on the baron, while Miss Martin turned to the Frau Pastor to secure the recipe for the delicious *ei-Kucken* the little maid was at that moment bringing in from the kitchen.

So "Siegfried" added a title to his other charms. Well, he was irresistible enough before. I saw no chance at all for plain Mr. Hatfield of Hatfield Abbey. And then I was roused from my gloomy thoughts by Beatrice.

"What has become of your friend, Monsieur de Villa Réal, Mr. Hatfield? I missed him at dinner to-day and at Herr Lamprecht's lecture this afternoon."

"I don't know," I answered. "He has unaccountable impulses every little while, and goes off on a sight-seeing tour. I rather think he must be on one of them today."

The Herr Geheimrath—von Blarcom was his name—was at supper that night, as he had been occasionally, and I saw him prick up his ears. I was sorry I had spoken. I had always been a little sceptical concerning those mysterious trips of Marcel's, and I hoped I had not aroused any suspicion in the Herr Geheimrath.

“Do you think he will be back in time for his three o'clock class tomorrow?” asked Beatrice. “Herr Bernhard has announced such an interesting subject for his lecture; I'm sure he would be sorry to miss it.”

I could not tell her whether Marcel would be back, but one thing had struck me in Beatrice's speech: She was going to a three o'clock lecture tomorrow. Did she intend to inform me of that fact? I, also, had a three o'clock lecture. I would walk home from the Augusteum with Beatrice. Provided always, I added to myself, that the little Rumanian does not get ahead of me.

I was determined he should not get ahead of me and I met Beatrice at the Herr Professor's door, in a perfectly casual way, I hoped, as the class was filing out. I don't believe she was as surprised as she looked at seeing me, and I'm not sure I looked as surprised as I tried to at meeting her.

“May I walk home with you, since our ways lie together?” I asked.

“You may,” she answered, with a bewildering smile.

Miss Martin did not accompany her to the three o'clock lecture,—it was broad daylight, and there was no need of a chaperone. Not so very broad, either, for the class was not over till four o'clock and the short winter day was rapidly drawing to a close. By six it would



be quite dark when Beatrice must return for Herr Lamprecht and Miss Martin would be with her. I must make the most of this tête-à-tête.

I'm not sure I made a great deal of it. The way was short,—through the beautiful Augustus-Platz and down the curving promenade to the Königs-Platz. A fine, cold drizzle was falling, and I had foolishly worn no overcoat. Between the cold and a kind of nervous excitement at my unusual good luck I had hard work to keep my teeth from chattering. I had worn no overcoat, partly because it was a fad with the university men to wear none,—to harden themselves, they said,—and partly because my coat was of last year's cut and I was somewhat of a fop in matters of dress. I had thought it presentable enough to bring to a German university; I would save my money for a new one when I should once more be back in London. But I had not expected to meet a beautiful and perfectly tailored American girl in whose eyes I would like to shine. I repented now of my foolish economy, and determined to wire my tailor that same night to send me one as soon as he could make it, with *carte blanche* as to cloth, fur-lining, and seal collar and cuffs.

But though the walk was somewhat of a disappointment, possibly it was because of my pinched and chattering condition, of which I was duly ashamed, that I received an invitation to tea. As we entered the bleak, stone corridor, grim and chill as an iceberg, of the building where the Bernhof Pension was located, and climbed the long flight of stone steps to the second *étage*, Beatrice said to me:

“It's such a miserable day, Mr. Hatfield; won't you

come in and have a cup of tea? We 're Americans, you know, and we don't always drink tea, but Miss Martin has it ready for me on the days I go to Herr Lamprecht's; she says I need fortifying."

I accepted the invitation with alacrity, and was rather amazed to find their sitting-room so well-furnished and attractive. Its crimson plush furniture looked warm and inviting on that bleak day, with the big white porcelain-stove comfortably radiating warmth, a brass tea-kettle steaming cheerfully on a small table placed on a platform by one of the windows, and behind the table the homely face of Miss Martin beaming with hospitable cheer as she welcomed a guest to her tea-table. There was nothing grim about Miss Martin when she was playing hostess, and if I had not already begun to feel a genuine liking for her, despite her queer Yankeeisms and her efforts to be forbidding, I should have begun on that afternoon. From her perch on the little platform she dispensed generous slices of bread and butter and thick pieces of English plum-cake, together with steaming cups of fragrant tea.

Beatrice and I sat on the big, red plush sofa behind a second inevitable table, always drawn up before the sofa in Germany, and nothing could have been cozier; the room warm and glowing with softly shaded lamps, and the rain driving furiously against the long windows. My shivering fit was quickly over, and for the first time in my acquaintance with Beatrice I lost all sense of *mauvaise honte* in talking to her.

"Ugh!" said Miss Martin, from her perch on the platform by the window, "what an evening! Beatrice, I don't believe you ought to think of going to Herr Lamprecht's."

"Oh!" dismay in her tone and in her eyes, "you don't really think so, Miss Martin? You know he is to talk on how Bismarck precipitated the Franco-Prussian War. I can't bear to miss that!"

"You really enjoy him?" I asked incredulously. It did not seem possible that any one so ravishingly pretty as she looked at that moment could have brains enough to follow the old fellow in his divagations; much less to enjoy them. Beauty and brains, I had heretofore flippantly believed, had nothing to do with each other.

"Of course I do. Don't you?"

"I don't believe you understand half he says."

"Why not?"

"Well, you know, he's difficult to understand, and—I never supposed girls cared much for politics. Do you take notes?"

"Of course."

"In English, or German?"

"German."

"Would you mind showing me your note-book? I would like to see what you made of that last lecture; I could n't make much of it."

"I don't mind," said Beatrice, opening a drawer of the table as she spoke. Taking out her note-book, she handed it to me. "You will probably consider them puerile, but you could n't expect me to grasp the subject quite as well as if I were a would-be diplomat."

"Who told you I was going to be a diplomat?"

"A little bird."

I wondered who, for I believed I had confided in no one but Marcel, but it didn't matter. I opened the book and was astonished at what I saw. I had

thought to find an occasional sentence, perhaps, from each lecture, but it was closely written, page after page, in terse, idiomatic German, as idiomatic as Herr Lamprecht's own and always seizing on the gist of the subject. I had sometimes had my suspicions of that little note-book, when a furtive glance from my side bench had shown me Beatrice writing in apparent absorption. I had sometimes thought it a pose, and sometimes had wondered if she were not writing something far removed from German politics, something for Herr Lubella's eyes, perhaps. I blushed now at my unworthy doubts.

"Your notes are fuller and far better than mine," I said as I glanced rapidly through page after page. "I wish you would lend them to me to help me in getting up my seminary. Are you going in for the seminaries?"

"Oh, no; I should be scared to death. Besides, I'm not sure we 'll be here."

"Not be here!" I ejaculated, and no doubt my dismay was funny to see.

Beatrice laughed.

"You did not suppose we intended to stay in Leipzig for the rest of our days, did you?"

"Not quite that. But where are you going—and when?"

"Oh, we have n't decided."

But here Miss Martin spoke up, a little sharply. I suppose she saw no reason for making a secret of such a matter, and perhaps did not approve of keeping one on tenter-hooks. Perhaps she had a kind heart under her stern exterior.

"I thought we had decided, Beatrice," she said. "I

thought it was arranged we were to leave for Italy the first of February."

"Oh," said Beatrice, guiltily.

And "Oh," said I, reproachfully. "Why would you not tell me?"

"Yes; why not?" asked Miss Martin.

"I don't know why not," said Beatrice, petulantly. "But I did n't suppose it was a matter of such importance as to demand a categorical answer to a carelessly-asked question."

"It will be a matter of very grave importance to me—when you are gone. I shall miss you horribly."

I spoke so low and so close to her ear, as she sat beside me on the sofa, that I hoped Miss Martin, busy with the tea-things and pouring out my third cup of tea, did not hear. Beatrice glanced up quickly at me, but said nothing.

"Beatrice," said Miss Martin briskly, "I have just thought of another reason why you ought not to go to Herr Lamprecht's this evening. You know we are to dine at Herr Feronce's, and dinner is at half-past seven. You never get home from Herr Lamprecht's until after seven; you would n't have time to dress."

"We could dress before the lecture, could n't we?" persisted Beatrice, who evidently did not want to give up Herr Lamprecht. Was it because she did n't want to miss Lubella?

"Impossible! It's a quarter of six now."

I sprang to my feet.

"I have overstayed my time; I will go at once," I apologized.

But Beatrice did not rise.

"Sit down, Mr. Hatfield," she said. "We are not going to the lecture, and you can stay a few minutes longer, if you like, and still have time, I suppose."

"I don't believe I 'll go, either," I answered, "and if you 'll permit me, I will stay a few minutes longer. It's too disagreeable to go out, if one is n't obliged to, even to hear Lamprecht."

"Yes; I'm rather sorry we are dining out. Home, even if it's only a room in a pension, is more inviting on such a night."

"Do you know," I said, "there's something familiar about that name Feronce. Would you mind telling me who they are?"

I was thinking of what Marcel had told me of his prospective engagement to Mlle. Feronce.

"They are the Gaston Feronces, of Wilhelm-Seyfferth-Strasse. Perhaps you have noticed their villa, the most beautiful in Leipzig, I think."

The name of the street enlightened me.

"I have a letter of introduction to Herr Gaston Feronce," I exclaimed, "but I have never thought of presenting it."

"Then you have missed much. They are charming people, Herr Feronce and his wife, and there is a most charming Fräulein Feronce, Herr Feronce's sister. Are you always so careless with your letters of introduction?"

"I'm afraid I have missed a lot," I said ruefully. "Just think; I, too, might have been invited to dinner this evening!"

"So sorry!" said Beatrice mockingly, but I thought she was sorry a little.

"Well, I'm *really* sorry, Mr. Hatfield," declared Miss

Martin. "They all talk German, of course, except when they remember me and every one tries to be polite and speak English for a few minutes. Perhaps, if you were there, you would spare me a word now and then."

"I certainly should, Miss Martin, and would be delighted to have the chance. Try to get me an invitation to the next dinner, won't you?" I responded jestingly.

"But you have n't presented your letter of introduction."

"I'm going up to my room this minute and send it off. See of what joys I have deprived myself by my procrastination!"

I rose to my feet as I spoke, and this time I really made my adieus. I knew they would be glad to be rid of me, since they had a dinner toilet to make, but more than that I was eager to get my letter of introduction off at once. If it should arrive at Herr Feronce's before the dinner, perhaps my name might come up, and Miss Martin might contrive an invitation for me to the next one.

Outside Beatrice's door, in the dimly lighted corridor, I met Fräulein Elsa. Of course she knew where I had been, and her smile was most significant. I detested that smile; indeed, I was beginning to feel as little liking for Fräulein Elsa as I was sure she felt for me. I was sorry it was such a miserable night and Marcel not at home, for I would have gone out somewhere for supper with him. As it was, if I wanted any supper, my only sensible course was to take it at Frau Bernhof's generous table, though I foresaw a rather dreary meal, with only the Frau Pastor and her two daughters for company, and the lugubrious Herr Lubella—he was sure to

be lugubrious, with Beatrice neither at Herr Lamprecht's nor at the supper-table.

I hurried upstairs to my room, wrote my note, and then ran out in the driving rain to the corner of Königs-Platz, where I would be sure to find *diensmen* in waiting. I despatched my note by one of them and directed him to bring back an answer to my room, for I had accompanied my letter of introduction with a note, asking to be allowed to call the next day. I recalled now that my father had told me, in giving me the letter of introduction, that Herr Feronce was an old school-mate at Eton, and so I did not doubt that my proposal would be granted.

The *diensman* was back in an incredibly short time,—for a *diensman*,—bringing a cordial answer. The Feronces were giving a dinner that evening for two charming Americans, the note said, and if I would waive the informality of so late an invitation, they would be delighted to have me, also, as a dinner-guest. If I could come, I need not reply; my silence would be taken as assent.

I did reply, of course, since I wished to assure myself of welcome by putting my host and hostess to no more inconvenience than necessary. By the time my second note was despatched it was half-past six. I had a whole hour for dressing, and never did I make a toilet with more meticulous care.

Also, never, I think, did I dress to such a lilting rhythm of thoughts, as I pictured to myself Beatrice's surprise—and, I hoped, delight—when she should meet me at Herr Feronce's dinner.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE UNPLEASANT ONES BEGIN

**A**MONG the pleasantest of the pleasant things that happened during those few days was the dinner-party. It was my first formal dinner in Germany, and there would have been many things about it interesting to me, even if I had not been particularly interested in the guests—or in one guest.

I am not of that class of my countrymen who find nothing good in foreign lands and foreign customs. I know we are often accused of "insular prejudice," but I sometimes wonder whether the accusation is deserved; I know that I, at least, enjoy a foreign land and all its customs in proportion to their difference from our own. That does not mean that I am not glad to get back to my own country when the sojourn in a distant land is over, but certainly the edge of enjoyment in travel would be lost, if one was to see and experience only what one finds at home.

I have heard much the same accusation made against Americans, that they are much given to boasting of their superior home comforts and methods of living in general. I never heard Beatrice boast. I do not remember that I ever heard her make comparisons between America and Germany, and I often heard her express a naïve delight in German idiosyncrasies and German customs.

The dinner at Herr Feronce's, therefore, would have

been most interesting, even if the host and hostess had been less charming, or no Miss Martin and no Beatrice had been present. To begin with, the house itself was very beautiful. Many of our country houses are more magnificent, but there are very few, if any, London houses that could compare with the Villa Feronce. Rooms of stately dimensions, opening into one another by wide archways, gave charming vistas and a sense of noble space usually lacking in our town houses. The cuisine, though essentially different from either an English or a French one, was delightful. The wines were excellent, and the conversation was of a more general character than is customary at an English table, and perfectly unconstrained. My host was extremely handsome, dark and more of the French type than the German. I learned later that his family had come from France in the Huguenot exodus, and I have learned to associate great charm of manner with the old Huguenot blood. I also liked their drinking "*Hoch der Kaiser!*" at the table, and the quaint formality with which one guest, selected, I suppose, by the others, rose to his feet at the close of dinner and thanked his host in a set speech for the good cheer and good things he had given them. I liked, too, the formal speech of the host in response, rising to his feet to make it; and then the guests passed around the table, after the meal was over, and shook hands with each other, while they uttered their friendly, "*Gesegnete Mahlzeit!*" And I liked best of all the fact that the men did not remain in the dining-room, drinking and telling stale stories, but accompanied the women to one of the great drawing-rooms, where tea, coffee, and beer with sandwiches were shortly served.

No, not best of all; for best of all was the surprise I gave Beatrice and Miss Martin. I think at first they could hardly believe their eyes, and then they were inclined to think I had been bluffing when I had pretended not to have presented my letter to Herr Feronce and had begged Miss Martin to secure me an invitation to the next dinner.

There was no chance to explain during the evening, for there was no opportunity for tête-à-têtes, all conversation being general and inclined to be jovial. And if I had surprised Beatrice, I was in turn surprised. My host met me in the outer reception-room, to show his cordiality to my father's son, and as he conducted me into the drawing-room where the guests were gathered, I saw, towering inches above the others, the noble head of "Siegfried." I was glad I was to meet the Baron von Dreidorf. Despite the fact that I recognized in him a formidable rival, I felt greatly drawn to him.

The baron, being the only titled man present, took the hostess in to dinner. He sat on her right, and I, being the only other foreigner, was given Miss Feronce and sat on our hostess's left. Since I could not have Beatrice, I was very well satisfied, for Miss Feronce was charming and I could see Beatrice whenever I lifted my eyes. Occasionally I had a fleeting, almost imperceptible, smile from her. In that I was much better off than the baron for, being on Frau Feronce's right and Beatrice being on Herr Feronce's left, he could not catch a glimpse of her without making an effort.

And after dinner, these music-loving Germans gathered around the piano, and for a while there was some good music which soon drifted into singing national airs until

Miss Feronce was persuaded to bring out her guitar and sing German folk-songs, which she did very well indeed. I don't know who discovered that Beatrice could sing plantation melodies, but some one did, and I don't know how the others were affected, but I certainly was ravished by eye and ear. In her white lace dress, one bare white shoulder and the filmy bodice of her dress crossed diagonally by the broad ribbon of pale blue that held the guitar, her rounded arm and graceful hand lightly sweeping the strings, her brown eyes, merry or sad with the music, she was fairly bewitching and I could see that others besides the baron and me thought so, too. But I was not surprised by her loveliness. I had always known she was beautiful, only I had never before seen her in evening dress, for the Germans, as a rule, do not wear evening dress to the opera, as the English do,—and the Americans, too, I suppose,—and evidently she tried to do in Germany as the Germans do. I was not surprised by her loveliness, but I was surprised at the richness and sweetness of her voice. They were simple little airs she sang, but most of them had a plaintive quality that suited well the thrilling timbre of her contralto undertones and the clear, flute-like quality of her soprano overtones. I wanted to hear her sing something big, something worthy of such a voice, but the young Germans present were fascinated by the witchery of the plantation songs and kept calling for more and more, until she declared firmly she would not sing another note that evening.

I had a third very agreeable surprise when the time to go arrived. Miss Martin offered me a seat in her carriage, since our destination was the same.

"I could not have extended you even so simple a

courtesy," she said, when we were rolling all too swiftly homeward, "if you had not been an Englishman; these foreigners are so likely to misunderstand one."

I did not misunderstand, but I was grateful for the opportunity of a quiet, friendly talk, and I tried to make the most of the short ride.

All lights in public corridors are turned out at ten o'clock in Germany, and the stone corridor of our pension building was pitch black as we entered it. But fortunately I had not forgotten my box of wax tapers, with which no good German is ever unprovided, and I lighted the two women up the bleak, stone stairway to the door of the pension. Here we waited an appreciable interval for the sleepy little maid to answer the ring.

"We have had a pleasant evening, haven't we?" said Beatrice as we waited.

"Very," I answered. "Are all your evenings at the Villa Feronce as delightful?"

"Not quite, perhaps," she replied hesitatingly. And then with a roguish twinkle in her brown eyes, plainly discernible by the faint glow of the wax taper: "You know this is the first time that you and Baron von Dreidorf have been there."

Gretchen opened the door, I said "Good night," mounted another long flight of stone stairs to my rooms, and with each step tried hard to determine whether her little speech was intended to arouse jealousy of the baron, or to convey to me, thus casually, that it was I who had added to her pleasure in the evening. But whichever she had intended, I found myself glowing

with pleasure,—foolishly, I told myself,—in the belief that it was I she had meant, and not the baron.

These are some of the pleasant things that happened to me during those few days, but on the very next day the unpleasant ones began. In the first place, in the morning, walking from the Königs-Platz to the library, I came suddenly face to face with that dark-visaged southerner who had affected me so unpleasantly in Dresden. It was with difficulty that I restrained a start of surprise at this unexpected meeting, and he did not wholly succeed in restraining one, followed immediately by the same dark scowl he had bestowed upon me in Dresden. What had brought him to Leipzig? Was he following Beatrice, and did that account for his displeasure at sight of me?

I tried to put all thought of the man out of my mind, but all the morning, while outwardly burying myself in some stiff reading Herr Lamprecht had recommended to us, I was subconsciously wondering what had brought this man to Leipzig. Beatrice had seemed to dread him in Dresden; indeed, she had seemed almost in terror of him. Ought I to warn her of his presence here?

I decided not to. The man could do her no real harm; these were not the days of dark deeds and stage villains. Very likely he was only in Leipzig for a few days on business of his own, and she probably would not meet him. It was needless to cause her any unnecessary terrors.

Nevertheless I decided, if I had an opportunity, to speak to Miss Martin about my meeting, putting her on her guard and asking her not to alarm Beatrice. At dinner there was no opportunity, and, indeed, in

the pleasure of meeting Beatrice again and finding her more openly friendly than I had ever found her before—due, I supposed, to the Feronce dinner,—I forgot all about the man. I thought of him again in my room, when I was preparing for Herr Lamprecht's lecture, and I determined to make an effort to walk home with Beatrice and Miss Martin when I might find my chance to speak to Miss Martin, or, if that failed, I would make an attempt at supper-time.

But I was neither to walk home with the two nor to see them at supper; nor, indeed, for some days. And during that interval much was to happen.

The morning had been fairly bright for Leipzig, a pale, watery sun piercing the leaden canopy at intervals. But by afternoon there was no sun, and a cold drizzle of rain had set in. Had it not been for the prospect of seeing Beatrice,—I had discovered that no inclemency of weather kept her indoors,—I would have been tempted not to leave my huge, white porcelain-stove, whose comfortable vicinity I had been hugging all the afternoon. I was fighting the beginnings of one of those colds that seem so little serious, and yet can make one utterly wretched, and I have to thank the cold for causing me to wear my despised overcoat, a most fortunate thing, as it turned out.

I had hoped, and rather expected, to find Marcel at the lecture. Heretofore, his absences had never been longer than two or three days, but this was the fourth day since he had appeared either at table or in the lecture-room. He was not at Herr Lamprecht's, and at intervals during the lecture-hour I found myself wondering why, a little uneasily. But if Marcel was not

there, Baron von Dreidorf and Herr Lubella were, and both were in their accustomed seats directly behind Beatrice and Miss Martin. There was no chance for me, I knew, even before I saw the two men assisting them into their wraps and walking out of the room beside them.

I was in a beastly humor as I lingered in the aula of the Augusteum, pretending to read the names of the students who had fallen in 1870, should any one be looking, but really giving Beatrice and her party time to get well ahead of me. I was not quite sure as to the cause of my ill-humor, whether it was my cold, my meeting with the southerner, Marcel's prolonged absence, or the proprietary air of the two men walking home with Beatrice. It must be a combination of all four, I decided, as I stepped out of the Augusteum into a night of inky blackness. The drizzle had turned to a fog, and even the street-lamps could do no better than form tiny circles of vaporous glow in the thick fog, leaving wells of pitch darkness between them. The fog was colder and more penetrating than the drizzle had been, and I hastened my steps as I began to shiver. There was no real necessity for lingering. If I overtook Beatrice and her party, I could easily pass them unrecognized in the dark.

As I left the Augustus-Platz and turned into the Promenade I noticed a small motor-car, looming black in the fog, drawn up beside the curb, just beyond the dull glow of a street-lamp. It was stationary, but it was chugging away as if some one had left it only for a moment, and I idly commented to myself on the foolishness of allowing a motor to stand with its engine running.



But just as I was about to pass it, I heard through the chug, chug, of the engine a low whistle and a strangely familiar one. It was a bar of the *Pilgrim's Chorus* that Marcel and I had fallen into the habit of using as a signal between us.

## CHAPTER IX

### THROUGH THE THURINGIAN FOREST

**A**T the sound of that whistle I involuntarily checked my steps, and found myself listening to Marcel's voice speaking hurriedly and guardedly.

"Get aboard, will you, Hugh? And be quick about it!" was what his voice said; for, peer as I might, I could distinguish no outline of a figure in the dense fog through which the motor loomed vaguely.

I did not hesitate to obey, and, warned by the guarded tone, took my place in silence beside Marcel. I did not understand, but evidently there was some mystery I should solve in time. It was mystery enough to find Marcel handling a motor. I had never seen him run one before, and did not know that he knew how.

I did not break the silence that his guarded tone seemed to impose, except by a brief "Glad to see you back, Marcel." But after we had crossed the Pleisse and struck into the Connewitz Woods Marcel's tense attitude, which I could feel rather than see, seemed to relax a little.

"I want you to ride with me a little distance, Hugh," he said tersely. "I have something to tell you. You can go back by tram from Connewitz, or catch a train from Plagwitz, and still be in time for supper."

"All right; go ahead," I answered briefly, for I felt

an underthrill of excitement in his voice. "Supper is of no consequence; I can get something to eat anywhere."

"I'm flying for my life, Hugh, and perhaps when you hear why you won't ride another foot with me. I risked something in waiting for you to come out of Lamprecht's, partly because I want you to give my landlady and Frau Pastor Bernhof some money I owe them, but especially because I wanted to explain to you, myself, why I am leaving Germany. You will hear many tales of me, and I could not bear, Hugh, that you should misunderstand."

I was lost in a maze of rapid conjectures. Had Marcel killed some German officer, and thus was fleeing for his life? Whatever he had done, he need not fear that I would desert him. His voice through those last words had trembled slightly. No Englishman would have dared to betray so much feeling, but a Frenchman is different; he has the courage of his emotions where we Englishmen are cowards. But most of all had the way he said "Hugh" gone to my heart. It sounded as if he really loved me.

"I could never misunderstand you, I think, Marcel, but go ahead and tell me," I answered, purposely as carelessly and indifferently as I could manage. I was greatly moved by Marcel's manner, but more than I dreaded what he had to tell me, did I dread his fashion of telling it. I had seen excitable Frenchmen burst into tears! If that should happen to Marcel, I feared that my feeling of friendship for him would hardly stand the strain, so utterly distasteful to me would such an exhibition be in a man I cared for.

But I need not have feared.

"Hugh," he asked in his clipping French, to which he always resorted when strongly excited, "what kind of a man do you regard as most despicable?"

"I'm not sure I can answer that offhand, Marcel. A coward, I suppose. But why?"

"I'm not a coward," he answered, and his tones were less tense, as if he even might be smiling slightly in the dark. "If I had been a coward, I would never be what I am now—a spy."

"A *spy*!" For a moment I was too much amazed and shocked to utter another word.

"Yes, Hugh, a spy," he answered grimly. "In a moment we will reach Connewitz, and I will let you out. You can go home on the tram. You need not ride any further than is absolutely necessary with a man you despise. But first I still have something to say to you."

But I would not let him finish; I had recovered control of myself.

"I do not despise you, Marcel," I interrupted hotly. "If you are a spy, you have some good reason for being one. And though I confess the calling has not seemed to me a very honorable one, and I would hate to be called a 'spy,' I cannot conceive of dishonor in connection with you. What you have done is right from your standpoint; of that I'm sure."

"Thank you, Hugh," he answered more quietly. "I used to feel as you do. When this service was first broached to me I shrank from it with horror. But an honorable man said to me,—the most honorable man I know,—'There is no dishonor in serving one's country

in any capacity; the greater the sacrifice, the higher the honor. Let the true patriot lay upon the altar of his country his pride and even his self-respect, if need be; he will only be the worthier of the pride and respect of his compatriots. Such a service demands talents of a high order, courage and zeal of the keenest, and a willingness to endure all kinds of hardships and privation. Will you go, de Villa Réal? What could I say but 'Yes, my General?'

I was not wholly convinced, but as I listened I began to think the office might not be incompatible with the loftiest patriotism and the keenest sense of honor. I said so to Marcel.

"Thank you, Hugh," he answered soberly. "I might have liked a more unqualified commendation, but this is more than I could have expected. And now here is Connewitz, and here is the money for my landlady and for Frau Pastor Bernhof. You do not mind giving it to them, do you?"

He was slowing the motor as he spoke, and he put one hand in his pocket to draw out the money. But I stopped him.

"I'm not going to get out at Connewitz," I said, laying my hand on his arm. "Keep your money till I leave you."

He began to remonstrate.

"But you cannot get back in time for supper; I'm not sure we can catch that train from Plagwitz."

"I'm not going to get out at Plagwitz."

"What do you mean, Hugh?"

"I mean that I'm going on with you, far enough,

at least, to find out why you are so suddenly fleeing for your life and what is your plan of escape."

He was silent a moment, but he had speeded up the car again and we were flying past the lights of the little village at fully thirty miles an hour.

"Very well, Hugh," he said at last. "You may go as far as Weimar, if you like. We can get some supper there, I suppose, and you can catch the midnight train back to Leipzig."

I doubted whether I would catch that midnight train, especially if Marcel were going farther, but I said nothing, and he began to explain why he was so suddenly fleeing from Germany.

"All these trips of mine, Hugh, when you have hinted so broadly that you would like to accompany me and I have been compelled to ignore your hints, have been to fortifications, or for the purpose of becoming familiar with German roads. I have sometimes told you I was visiting Weimar or Luther's old home, when I was really studying the fortifications of the Rhine or the frontier. It was thought best for me to make my headquarters at some interior town, like Leipzig, rather than to enter a university nearer the frontier, like Bonn. A Frenchman at Leipzig University would not be under such strict surveillance as at Bonn, nor so likely to excite suspicion."

"Is your university course only a bluff, then?" I asked, with a sinking at my heart. The idea of being made attachés at the same court had grown very dear to me in the last few weeks.

"Not entirely. I was glad to be assigned to Leipzig

for more than one reason. I wanted to take that course of Lamprecht's, for I really intend, Hugh, to enter the diplomatic service some day. I was not bluffing when I told you that, and I still hope that we may one day be accredited to the same court. That is," he added hastily, but hesitating a little, "if you still care about it, Hugh?"

"Of course I care," I answered heartily, for at last I had thrown prejudices and misgivings to the winds. Spy or no spy, Marcel was a patriot, a gentleman, and a friend after my own heart.

"Of course I care about it, more now than ever. You are beginning to seem something of a hero to me, instead of being merely an ordinary French gentleman."

We were passing the last electric light in the little village as I spoke. It shone full on Marcel's face as he turned it to me, lit up by a flashing smile of gratitude. For a moment I thought it about the most beautiful human face I had ever beheld.

"You *are* a good sort, Hugh," he said, with a little laugh to cover a deeper emotion, and dropping into a favorite English expression that he had borrowed from me.

It was a full two hours' ride to Weimar, even at the rapid pace Marcel was keeping up. Plenty of time to tell me everything. For some weeks he had been fearing that he was under suspicion, he said. On this last trip he had become certain of it. He had discovered he was being shadowed by a man he felt sure was in the German secret service. He had met him at every turn. He believed he had given him the

slip at last, and had hurried back to Leipzig to secure some valuable papers and make arrangements for returning to Paris. A spy's usefulness was gone when he began to be under suspicion. He had arrived in Leipzig only an hour or two before, but on the way to his rooms had passed the same man on the street. Thanks to the dark and foggy afternoon, he hoped he had not been recognized, but he could not be sure. He had hurried to his rooms, secured his papers and a reserve supply of money, hastened down to a small out-of-the-way garage, whose location he had noted for just such an emergency, secured this reliable little motor for an out-of-town trip, and then risked everything by waiting on the Promenade for me.

"I'm not worth the risk, Marcel," I said, when he had finished his recountal, "but I'm tremendously glad you took it. I would n't have missed this farewell trip for much."

"Nor I. It's worth more to me than you think. Only—if I should be implicating you in any way, if you, too, should fall under suspicion of the secret service, I could never forgive myself."

Through all Marcel's long recital of his adventures, to which I had listened with hardly a word of interruption, every time he mentioned meeting the secret-service man who had dogged his steps there had flashed through my mind a vision of the dark-browed southerner.

"Tell me how your secret-service man looks," I said to him now. "I would like to be able to recognize him, should I meet him."



His description limned my man accurately; I could not have described him as vividly myself.

"I think I have seen your man," I said; "in Dresden two or three times, and this morning in Leipzig. I do not like his looks."

"This morning! The fellow must travel by aeroplane! I thought I had left him behind, and he arrives here a good six hours ahead of me. But how do you happen to know him, Hugh?"

I told him of my chance meetings with the man, how he seemed to be keeping an eye on Beatrice, and of the latter's terror of him.

"I thought it was Beatrice he was after when I saw him this morning in Leipzig, but I see now it was you. I am already in the fellow's bad graces; there is no love lost between us."

"All the more reason why I should not have compromised you. He will be glad of any excuse to make you trouble. I'm sorry, Hugh. You must be sure to catch that midnight train from Weimar and be in all your familiar haunts tomorrow."

But by the time we reached Weimar I had fully determined to go on to the frontier with Marcel. His plan was to send the motor back from some little town on the border, and contrive to steal across into Belgium by night on foot. But any delay to send back the car would in itself expose him to great danger. I would attend to that for him, and would wait at the frontier until I was satisfied that he was safe across the line.

Needless to say, Marcel would not hear of my plan when I broached it to him. We were winding through Weimar's charming little park on the banks of the Ilm,

and Marcel had just pointed out to me Goethe's Gartenhaus, an ideal spot for one to think and write in, as we could plainly see, for we had run out of the fog and into clear, winter moonlight as we approached Weimar. I had taken off my hat as we passed Goethe's home.

"Take mine off, too, Hugh," said Marcel, whose hands were occupied, and I did so.

"I'm glad to see you reverence genius, even if it is German," I said, as I clapped his hat back with a smashing blow. Marcel's bitterness toward everything German had always been most pronounced.

"Genius is of no nationality," he answered. "I thought you knew that, Hugh."

"I do. Take care!" I exclaimed involuntarily, for we had made a sharp turn down to the little Neckar bridge and came face to face with the headlights of another car. Marcel was not a very careful driver, and we were running too recklessly for safety through the winding roads of the park. I would have liked to take the wheel myself, but did not want to propose it.

"Can you drive, Hugh?" he asked, as we slowed down after a swift swerve that saved us from collision by the fraction of an inch.

"Fairly well."

"Then take the wheel, will you, till we get into Weimar? I'm not in any condition to drive, I believe. I'm a bit tired. And while I don't mind taking risks, if I have only myself to consider, I don't like to be responsible for a passenger."

"You'll not get hold of this wheel again this trip, Marcel. It's mine for the frontier," I said, as I took

my place in the driver's seat. "Not in condition? I should say not! When did you get your last sleep?"

"I had two hours on the train night before last."

"Then shut your eyes now and snatch forty winks; only tell me first in which direction Weimar lies."

"Just follow the road you're on till it strikes a broad, straight avenue. That's the Belvedere Drive, and it leads straight into Weimar. Turn to the right when you come to it."

With that he pulled his soft hat down over his eyes and was asleep in a trice, with his head resting at an uncomfortable angle against the back of the seat but never stirring.

When we struck the Belvedere Drive it proved to be so broad and straight, so well-made and well-lighted a road, that I put on speed. Until I slowed down for the streets of Weimar we must have been going at nearer fifty than thirty miles an hour.

But I was all at sea in Weimar and, much as I hated to, I was compelled to arouse Marcel, for I knew nothing of his plans. Under his guidance I gained a fairly good view in the moonlight of the outside of Schiller's house and Goethe's, and the other attractions of the little village so wonderfully rich in attractions. I promised myself that some day in the spring I would arrange a party to Weimar among Frau Pastor Bernhof's pensionaires, and enjoy the charm of the place at my leisure, enhanced a thousandfold by Beatrice's companionship.

Marcel directed me to the Kaiserin Augusta Hotel, close by the *bahnhof*. I suggested that the vicinity of

the station might be dangerous for him; the authorities might be on the lookout for him there.

"It would be tomorrow," he answered. "But I'm fairly certain that fellow is still lying in wait for me around Leipzig. Tomorrow morning he will discover that I have fled, and then every train and every *bahnhof* in the country will be dangerous. If I could get a midnight train out of Weimar toward the frontier, I would take it and trust to luck to keep ahead of his telegrams, but the only midnight trains runs east, not west, and I'm going to stick to my little motor-car and steal by unfrequented roads through the Thuringian Forest. I believe I can make it."

I believed he could, but all the more was I determined to share the perils of his flight, for it began to present itself in the alluring aspect of a great adventure.

We spent a busy hour in Weimar. We had first to order our supper, and it must be a substantial one, for Marcel had had but little to eat in the last forty-eight hours and there was no knowing when we would dare take a meal in another *gast-haus*. It proved to be a good one, too, and while we were waiting for it to be served, I wrote a post-card to Frau Pastor Bernhof, telling her I was sight-seeing in Weimar and its vicinity and would probably be absent for two or three days. I got it off in time for that midnight train; she would receive it before breakfast and my absence would be accounted for.

It was with difficulty that I convinced Marcel that there was no use in his making objections; I was going with him to the frontier. But I succeeded at last,

and, having once yielded, I think he was glad of a comrade. We arranged that I should buy the petrol for replenishing the car, so that when inquiries were made Marcel could not be traced by that means. While I was buying petrol and looking after the motor, Marcel was laying in supplies of food for our trip. He explained carelessly to the *kellner* from whom he bought it—in his best Saxon, for Marcel was good at imitating the harsh dialect—that he was going to take the midnight train for Leipzig and Breslau, and there was no knowing when he would be able to get such good things to eat again.

We had left our motor in a quiet side street a little distance from the hotel, since we wished to give the appearance of arriving and departing by train, and warmed by hot coffee and fortified by a good supper, we set out from the side street on our long ride to the frontier. There were to be no stops, except such as the care of our car demanded or the necessity of foraging for food and drink, and we were to take turns at the wheel and at sleeping.

I had the first turn at the wheel, for Marcel was utterly exhausted. This time we managed a more comfortable sleeping posture for him by means of rugs, and we were hardly well started before he was deep in sleep. I doubt whether anything less than the challenge of a sentry would have roused him.

As for me, sleep was far from my eyelids. I was wildly exhilarated. This was life! On my skill and my discretion rested, for the time being, Marcel's safety; and despite the inevitable anxiety associated with the trust, I liked the sense of responsibility so new to me.

There are some disadvantages in being a younger son, and one of them is that everything is arranged and decided for one, often without so much as the courtesy of having one's inclinations consulted. Harold, dear old Harold, was a born leader, and even in our boyish games I had little chance to show any initiative of my own. Harold and I had been inseparable as boys,—more so than most brothers, I believe,—until he went up to Oxford a year earlier than I did. But I followed him to Christ Church a year later, and by dint of various "plowings" on Harold's part and steady application on mine, I caught up with him. We were never separated again until I was sent abroad for my training in diplomacy.

This separation from Harold had been a severe trial, but there were some compensations; at last I was beginning to know the joys of being my own master, arbiter of my own destiny.

I had Marcel's map of the roads and his electric flash. He never stirred without these, he had told me, and thus fully equipped I confidently guided the little car out of the lighted streets of Weimar into the dark country roads.

We began to get among the hills very soon after leaving the town, and our route grew wilder and more picturesque every moment. What had been rain and fog at Leipzig had evidently been snow here, and the white moonlight shining on our road made it often as bright as day. But very often, too, we glided into the dark shadow of some lofty hill, or plunged into the black depths of some mountain ravine, and then the moonlight was of little avail.

What with the clogging of the fresh snow, fortunately not very deep, the climbing of frequent hills, and the dangerous curves of the road, our pace had necessarily slackened. I chafed at this. Consulting my watch and the speedometer, I discovered that we had made only fifteen miles in our first hour out of Weimar. At that rate we would hardly reach Eisenach by morning, and we had planned to be far on the road to Cologne by break of day. It had been necessary to make a detour to avoid Erfurt with its big garrison, and though we were soon back on the main road, and slipped swiftly through the wide streets of Gotha, lying silent in sleep beneath the lofty Inselberg, the morning star, blazing in royal splendor through the clear mountain air, was riding high in the eastern sky by the time we coasted down the steep inclines of the frowning Horselberg into Eisenach.

## CHAPTER X

### UNTIL DEATH

**L**OVELY for situation is Eisenach and filled with associations of *Tannhäuser* and the Venusberg, and I registered a second vow to form a party for the Thuringian Forest when the days of spring should come.

It had been bitterly cold riding in an open car over high mountain crests and through deep mountain valleys, but thanks to my incipient influenza and the chilling rain of Leipzig, I was wearing a heavy fur-lined overcoat buttoned to the throat. Save that my hands sometimes grew too numb to hold the wheel and had to be slapped back into life, I was fairly comfortable. The air was keen and frosty, with an exhilarating tang to it far pleasanter than the raw, penetrating air of Leipzig.

And what had become of that cold I had spent the afternoon nursing beside my comfortable porcelain-stove? It was gone completely. Either the stimulus of excitement or the change to bracing mountain air had worked a marvelous cure. I never felt better in my life, or more in tune to enjoy the wonderful panorama of beetling cliffs and nestling valleys, leaping mountain torrents and frozen, dark, and sullen mountain tarns, that circled about us as our trusty little car



climbed steadily up a steep and winding incline to glide breathlessly down its farther slope, slipping perilously near the brink of yawning precipices.

I was almost sorry when we reached Eisenach, for now we would soon leave behind us the wilds of the Thuringian Forest. Yet there were compensations. As our car sped on toward Bebra and Cassel the roads grew level, smooth, and broad. By the time the sun rose at our back over the Horselberg, rapidly growing blue in the distance, I found our speedometer registering thirty-five miles. We might still hope to reach Cologne and the Rhine by evening.

By ten o'clock we had reached the environs of Cassel, just halfway from Leipzig to Cologne. It had been about seventeen hours since we left Leipzig. Could we go as far again in eight? Marcel, who had been sleeping heavily all the way from Weimar—a full twelve hours' nap—opened his eyes as we neared Cassel and demanded his whereabouts. When he heard that the town we were approaching was Cassel, he became very wide-awake indeed.

"We must give it the go-by, Hugh," he said. "It's a great railway center and a military station. That fellow in Leipzig has no doubt discovered my flight by this time, and Cassel is one of the places that will be most rigorously watched."

"All right," I answered, "but I'm hungry. What do you say to some breakfast?"

"Of course you're hungry, and tired and sleepy, too. As soon as we've had some breakfast I'll take the wheel for the rest of the way. There! Take that turn to the left. It's a country road, and we'll be sure to find a

village or a farm-house where we can buy some coffee."

No sooner were we well off the main road in a lonely spot than Marcel had me stop the car. "You are an English gentleman traveling for pleasure, Hugh, and from this time on I am your chauffeur," he explained. With that he produced an enormous pair of goggles and a chauffeur's cap, well-worn but respectable.

"Now please be a little captious and altogether surly with your chauffeur when anyone is by, Hugh; that's the German idea of an Englishman—intensely disagreeable and high-and-mighty toward his servants."

I was inclined to resent this characterization of an Englishman, but Marcel laughed at my show of indignation.

"By the way," he added to his instructions, "if anything should happen to the car, you know, a tire to be changed or anything like that, you are on no account to offer your assistance if anyone's around. Stand with your hands in your pockets and watch me sweat and blow, and throw me an occasional 'Damn' for good measure. Of course if there's no one around I sha'n't decline your assistance."

I could see the sense in his suggestions, but at first I did not like the rôle assigned me. Later I decided to enter into the spirit of it.

We ate our breakfast in the car from the lunch Marcel had provided at Weimar, determining to try for a cup of coffee at the first farm-house we should pass. I was to make the inquiries, for Marcel was supposed to understand no language but English. As good luck would have it we struck a very decent farm-house, and the pretty daughter of the farmer answered my resounding

knock. She ushered me into a comfortable living-room, warmed by the universal, white porcelain-stove, where the farmer's wife sat with her knitting. The good Hausfrau bustled away at once to the kitchen to superintend making the coffee, but not before I had begged her to allow my man to sit by her kitchen-fire and have a cup of coffee, since he was so cold. With many a "*Bitte*," "*Bitte*," and "*Ach, so*," my requests were granted, and the kitchen-wench was sent to summon the chauffeur to a seat by the fire, for it would be beneath the dignity of the daughter of the house to wait upon a hired man.

We had a good laugh over it when we were once more rolling away in our car. The coffee had been unexpectedly good, and we were both in the best of spirits. Marcel maintained that the kitchen-wench was better looking than the farmer's daughter, and that he had made eyes at her and said audacious things in English, which she understood not a whit, but at which she had giggled continuously. Moreover, she had stuffed two fat *kuchen* into his pockets when he was ready to leave, and he had given her a kiss in return, which she understood better than his English and resented not at all. He was in great spirits and laughed uproariously over his first attempt at flirting with a kitchen-maid, but half an hour later he was the most exemplary and stolid of chauffeurs.

At a bend in the road we came suddenly upon a column of soldiers out for a practice march. We were about to pass them, as far to one side of the road as we could get, when we were stopped by a stern "Halt! who goes there?"

This was practice, also, we supposed, but Marcel knew that nothing was ever a joke with the Germans where their military was concerned, and he slowed down at once. Then we were put through a grilling worthy of war times. I began to think this meant something more than practice. Doubtless the news of Marcel's flight and a description of his appearance had been wired everywhere, and we were suspicious persons. I was sure of it when the officer in command took a paper from his pocket and, as he read it, eyed first one of us and then the other. I would have given much to have caught a glimpse of the description, but whatever it was it seemed to suit me better than it did Marcel—with one exception. They had ordered us out of the car, and after eyeing me solemnly, the officer finally shook his head. "Too tall," I heard him saying rapidly to his lieutenant. "And there was only one of them. This man is unmistakably English and his chauffeur cannot even speak German." Then turning to me again:

"But how does it happen that you are on this unfrequented road?"

"My chauffeur thought, from his map, that we might make a short cut to Wiesbaden this way. Are we wrong?"

Wiesbaden was far off our route, but it was a fact that this road did connect farther on with the main road to Wiesbaden.

"No, it's all right," the officer answered, "but it's better to stick to the main roads. Especially, if you would avoid suspicion," was his parting shot.

We were glad enough to get off so easily, but I won-

dered that they had not suspected Marcel, for the description was bound to be something like.

"Not very," said Marcel. "It probably read: 'Very light hair, eyebrows and mustache golden brown.' Have n't you observed that I have no mustache and my hair and eyebrows are a rich chestnut? You, on the contrary, have hair of gold and eyebrows and mustache only a shade darker. You answered perfectly, except for size."

I looked at him in astonishment.

"Well, I *am* an unobserving ass!" I ejaculated. "I knew there was something queer about you, but I never discovered what it was until this minute. A fine diplomat I'll make if I don't cultivate my powers of observation."

But the truth was, as Marcel explained, that until now I had not had a good look at him. Except at Weimar, where we took supper together and I was too excited and too hurried to notice anything but my steak and coffee, I had only seen him muffled to the chin, with his hat pulled low over his eyes.

His disguise had worked, and though once or twice later we were regarded suspiciously, and even stopped and questioned on one occasion, we reached the little town of Deutz, opposite Cologne, in safety at five in the evening.

Marcel had no mind to go through Cologne. That was the one city that would be thoroughly winnowed to find him, he felt sure. He would send back the car from Deutz, cross the river in a small boat and tramp to the frontier, if he could find no safe conveyance. It could not be more than forty miles; not that, he sup-

posed, and a two days' tramp would do it. As for me, I might, if I would, attend to sending the car back from Deutz, but this was to be the end of our journeying together.

To that I did not agree for one moment. We hunted up a little out-of-the-way inn on the river-bank whose landlord promised a comfortable supper and to convey us afterward in his own boat up the river a few miles, and land us safely on the opposite side. I think the landlord suspected we were refugees from justice, for he charged an exorbitant price for these services; and the fact that we did not demur to his extortion probably confirmed him in his suspicions. As to our story that we were two English students bound for a tramp to Strassburg on a wager, and that we had estimated we could cut off many miles by taking the west bank of the Rhine, he probably believed as little of it as suited him, judging from his knowing smile.

While we were waiting for supper we ran our car to the office of the railroad express, and delivered it over to be returned to its owner in Leipzig. It was Marcel, after all, who attended to this, for it had occurred to him that if he did not wish to implicate me in any way in his flight, I had better not be concerned in this transaction, such sharp noses have the German police for even the faintest trail.

He sent it back under his own name, but hereafter, he informed me, as long as we remained together and in any communications he might address to me from across the frontier, he was "John Carter," an English Oxford student on a continental tour.

Our trip some five or six miles up the great river

in an open boat, a bitter wind blowing,—fortunately from the north and thus helping rather than impeding our progress,—the sky a black pall unlighted by moon or stars and the waters an inky mass around us, was full of discomfort and not without peril. We concluded our boatman had earned his fee, and wondered if he would not demand more before he allowed us to disembark. But the delighted grin with which he received the English gold Marcel dropped into his hand proved to us that the price seemed even more extortionate to him than it had seemed to us. No doubt he had never expected us to agree to it.

The man had told us we would find a little village five or six miles back from the river where we probably could get a night's lodging and breakfast; and so we did. The village was not much more than a hamlet of one street and the gast-haus was easy to locate by its swinging sign-board, but village and gast-haus, though it could not have been much after ten o'clock, were buried in sleep. It was with difficulty that we aroused the landlord and were surlily accommodated with a poor bed—one for the two of us. Next morning, however, we had a fairly good breakfast, a better cup of coffee than we could have expected and some eggs and bacon, an order which the landlord seemed to regard as a great extravagance on the part of poor, tramping students. But we knew we had hard work before us, and the day had turned bitterly cold. We had fully determined that we could not afford to make less than twenty miles, and if we could do more, so much the better. Good food was no extravagance.

We started out in high spirits, but long before the

day was over it was only by sheer, dogged determination that we plodded on. We were cold and hungry, and the snow was so deep that it was with difficulty we could drag a heavy foot out of one clogging drift to plunge it into another.

More than once we had reason to be glad we were afoot. There seemed to be endless practice marching going on in this part of Germany, and the nearer we drew to the frontier the more frequently were dark lines of moving men outlined against the white snow. And more than once, catching sight of them in the distance, we took refuge in fields or woods, and either lay low until the column had passed, or made a long detour to avoid them. Had we been in our little motor-car, we would have been stopped and questioned, without doubt, as rigorously as we had been near Cassel, and possibly with a less happy outcome.

Night came on suddenly and found us far from any house that seemed to promise shelter. We plodded resolutely on, though we would have given much for a good supper and warm bed. Reminded, perhaps, by the columns of marching men we had met, Marcel said whimsically:

"I'm not so sure I envy the life of a soldier—in winter, at least."

We little thought that in less than a year, and not far from the spot on which we stood, there would be hundreds of thousands of soldiers,—yes, millions,—enduring more cold and hunger and bitter hardships than we had ever dreamed could fall to the lot of a soldier, or to any human being.

Just now we felt we had about reached our limit of



endurance. Still we tramped on, half frozen and with an aching void where a full and comfortable stomach should have been, until we were ready to drop with fatigue. We were off the main road, keeping to by-roads and fields for the sake of safety, and could find no inn or house that seemed to promise food and shelter. We were trying to make this day's march as long as possible, for Marcel was determined that the next day should be his last in Germany; and so we pressed ahead, discarding some possible chances for supper and lodging in the hope of finding others as good farther on.

We were compelled at last to take up with such accommodations as a lonely farm-house, poorer and less attractive than any we had so far seen, could offer us. Either because the farmer and his frau were suspicious of two such rough looking tramps, or because they could furnish us nothing better, we slept in the hay in the barn with the cows and horses and pigs for company, and had a sandwich of black bread and sausage for supper.

Our sleep, nevertheless, was sound and refreshing, but we would have liked something for breakfast more satisfying than a cup of chicory coffee and the same black bread and sausage. The day was simply a replica of the one before as to hunger, cold, and fatigue, but we plodded on so energetically that it was still daylight when Marcel suddenly called a halt.

"Our ways part here, Hugh," he said. "The frontier is little more than a mile away, according to my map. I must go on and you must go back to Aachen; you will get there in time for supper."



"Our ways part here, Hugh," he said



"But I intend to cross the frontier with you. I shall not be satisfied until I know you are safe in Belgium," I remonstrated.

"No!" There was no use in questioning that "No." "You will only be a hindrance to me now. In fact, Hugh, it is of the utmost importance that you should *not* be with me, in case I should be arrested while trying to cross the frontier. I bear valuable papers. Should I be captured with these papers, I depend on you to find some means of letting my general know, and of telling him that I did my best for la belle France."

"But how will I know whether or not you are captured, if I am not with you?"

"If I succeed in getting across in safety, I will wire you. Decide now on your hotel, either in Aachen or Cologne, and if you do not hear from 'John Carter' by midnight, take what steps you can to let my general know. Here, I will write out his address for you, but I want you to commit it to memory and then destroy the paper. There must be no compromising papers found on you in case you fall under suspicion and are arrested."

I thought hard for a moment while he was tearing a leaf from his note-book and writing on it, and then, convinced of the common sense of his words, I yielded.

"All right, Marcel, I'll obey orders. I think I'll go on to Cologne and wait at the Metropole for your message. It will be easier to get back to Leipzig from Cologne than from Aachen."

"By the way, have you money for the hotel and the trip?" he asked abruptly.

I had to confess that I had not. There had been no chance to provide myself with money, and ordinarily I was in the habit of carrying only a little silver. Marcel had much more than he needed—it was always necessary for him to carry a surplus in case of just such an emergency as had arisen—and I did not hesitate to accept enough from him for my expenses, with a comfortable margin for the unforeseen. It was a loan I knew I could easily repay some day, though Marcel refused to consider it as such; it was simply a part of his expenses, he insisted.

That matter settled, he looked up at me shyly.

“Hugh,” he hesitated, “you won’t like it, I know. You are no Frenchman, but I ’m going to kiss you goodbye. I may never see you again, but as long as I live I will never forget your devotion.”

Somehow I did not mind his kiss and warm embrace, and I returned both awkwardly enough, but as best I could. I stood and watched him, a slender, lonely, dark figure plodding resolutely forward over the white snow of the long straight road, until he came to a bit of woodland. He had not once looked back, but here he halted a moment, turned and waved his hand, and then plunged into the woods. I knew he had left the road for fear of meeting a sentry at the frontier, and I knew, too, that he intended to stay quietly in the woods until nightfall,—he would take no chances on crossing the line.

I had seen the last of Marcel, and I had seen him through a mist that did not lie on the landscape, a mist that blurred the writing I tried to read on the bit of paper he had given me. It was the name and address

of his general, but the mist suddenly gathered into one big drop that fell and blotted the words written below the address:

Yours till death.

MARCEL.

## CHAPTER XI

### AT LAST I KNOW

**I** DASHED away a second tear that threatened to follow the first, read the address over carefully, and then struck a match and reduced the scrap of paper to ashes.

For a moment I was more than half resolved, despite Marcel's prohibition, to linger around the spot where I had last seen him, with a vague feeling that I would be on hand should he need me. What I could effect in the way of a rescue with the whole German army to be dealt with, I did not stop to consider. But sanity returned to me in a few minutes, and I realized that if I wanted to give Marcel any effective aid, I must, at the earliest possible moment, get to the Cologne hotel, where alone I could expect to get in communication with him.

The instant I arrived at this decision I strode off toward Aachen at a rate of speed I could not possibly have held for any length of time. But as luck would have it I had not gone more than a mile when a motor-car overtook me. The chauffeur was alone in it, and, whether in hope of a tip or from sheer good nature, he offered me a seat.

I was particularly anxious to get to Aachen before the shops closed for the night, and I jumped at his offer.

My sole baggage thus far had been a tooth-brush bought at Weimar; I did not care to present myself at the Cologne hotel without a traveling bag and a few of the necessities pertaining to the wardrobe of a civilized man. I think the chauffeur had no reason to regret his good nature, and on my part I gleaned much useful information from the fellow as to shops and railway trains that saved me much time in Aachen and enabled me to catch the 5:30 train for Cologne.

Also, I had been able to spend fifteen minutes in a barber's shop, a fifteen minutes exceedingly well spent; without it I would hardly have been received at any reputable hotel. As it was, although I had a clean shave and a much needed shampoo, and though my clothes had been brushed and my shoes shined, I did not feel any great confidence in the reception I should meet with at the Metropole. I believe the lordly hall-porter and the suave clerk did regard me with some suspicion, but when I demanded the best room in the hotel, with a fire, ordered a bath at once and dinner to be served à la carte at 8:30, their manner changed and they became all deference. I suppose hotel-keepers are the same the world over,—money, or the expenditure of it in their house, is the thing that counts.

The luxury of a thorough tubbing, fresh linen, and fresh underwear after four days of doing without, together with the pleasure of sitting down at my leisure to a well-ordered and well-served dinner, would almost have atoned for the discomforts I had been through, if I could have been at ease about Marcel. But it was hard to enjoy the comforts of one of the best hotels in Europe, to sit at my ease after dinner in the



winter-garden with a cigarette, a demi-tasse of black coffee, and an evening paper, and think of Marcel still tramping, hungry and footsore, through the dark and cold. Harder yet was it to think that at that moment he might be lying in a German prison with the certainty staring him in the face that for him there was no possibility of reprieve from the dishonorable fate of a spy.

A hundred times as I sat there, trying to fix my mind on the news-sheet I was pretending to read, I reviled myself for having deserted him. At least I should have known by this time what was his fate. But always for consolation there was the hope of that promised telegram, though as hours passed and it did not arrive, I began to suffer torments. Surely I should have heard before now, if I was to hear at all. One by one the guests deserted the winter-garden, and I saw the waiter in charge anxiously watching for some sign that I intended to follow them. He put out the more distant lights and left only a little circle about my chair, the sole one occupied in the deserted room. At last for very shame I could remain no longer. On my way to the lift I stopped at the office, told the clerk on duty that I was looking for a telegram, that if it arrived he was to send it up to me at once, and in my room, the door closed behind me, paced the floor desperately

I was on the verge of hysteria. What did no telegram mean except that Marcel was long since a captive; for I well knew he would make no effort to communicate with me, if he had been captured, for fear of getting me into trouble. It was one o'clock before I succeeded in getting myself sufficiently under control to think of going to bed. I would do my best to sleep,

and if there was no telegram in the morning, I would at once send a message to Marcel's general and begin a tour of investigation to ascertain Marcel's whereabouts.

But no sooner had I come to this determination, and begun to feel the better for it, than there came a knock at my door. The telegram had arrived! I tore it open with trembling haste and read:

'Just arrived. Harry and I hope you will join us here. Enjoying our trip immensely.

JOHN CARTER.'

It was dated Liège; Marcel's troubles were over and my anxieties set at rest. I was mystified for a moment by the "Harry," and then understood this was added for the sake of clinching his identity as a young Englishman on a continental tour. I had detained the boy who brought the message until I could read it. Now I instructed him to have me called in time for an early breakfast and to catch the first train for Cassel, and it was not many minutes after the door closed behind him until I was buried in sleep, and also literally buried under a huge feather-bed. For three nights I had either had no sleep or no bed that could be called one. Was it only three nights? Surely it must be a week, at least, since I had known the comfort of springs and mattress, clean blankets and sweet-smelling linen.

But hardly, had I dropped down into that deep well of delicious, dreamless sleep, or so it seemed to me, than I was rudely dragged once more to the surface and to consciousness by thundering raps upon my door. I almost gave up my overnight plan to reach Leipzig in time for Frau Pastor's good supper. Nothing in the

world, at that moment of painful return from oblivion, seemed of any worth when weighed in the balance with another hour of sleep. But a vision of Beatrice at the supper-table, tête-à-tête with Herr Lubella, flashed into my brain, and I was quickly on my feet, still staggering with sleep but yelling lusty "Ja, wohls" through the door to the perpetrator of that outrageous knocking.

The gray of the early dawn was mingling with the silvery light from a gibbous old moon, resting apparently on the tall cathedral spire, as I drove down to the station. I had had a comfortable breakfast; I was at rest about Marcel; the ghostly beauty of the wonderful cathedral, the stateliest in all Europe, enthralled me; I was on my way to Beatrice. This was a delightful world to be alive in.

From the news-stand in the hotel I had bought a Baedeker, and now, all the way to Cassel, I studied it diligently. It was Eisenach and Erfurt, Gotha, Weimar and Jena, I studied, for I was determined to be able to talk glibly of Goethe and Schiller and Luther, of the Wartburg, the Inselberg, and the Horselburg, if anyone questioned me about my trip. Of Marcel and his whereabouts I would know nothing.

From Cassel our way lay once more through the Thuringian Forest, and I was glad to put aside my Baedeker for the glories of the stately mountains circling about our route, the dark forests and deep ravines, the noisy, leaping torrents and still, sullen tarns.

After all I came near missing Frau Pastor's comfortable supper. Our train was late, and it was only by dint of walking at top speed when there was anyone to see, and breaking into a run when there was none, that I

succeeded in reaching my room in time for a hasty toilet, and descended to Frau Pastor's warm and brightly lighted supper-room when the meal was half over.

My entrance created something of a sensation. Mr. Witkowski, who attended supper fitfully, but happened to be present this evening, and Herr Lubella, who was now a regular attendant, rose and shook hands with me heartily, after the English fashion they both affected. The Herr Geheimrath, and the Swede, neither of whom I had seen at supper before, rose also, making their formal bows with clicked heels. I had made my bow to the Frau Pastor and Fräuleins Marta and Elsa on entering, and then, won by the Frau Pastor's sweet smile of welcome, I went forward and shook hands with her. This gave me an opportunity to shake hands with Miss Martin and Beatrice without seeming to make invidious distinctions in my greetings. Miss Martin's smile was cordial and Beatrice's, I dared to hope, expressed delight. Altogether it was a real home-coming, and I felt tremendously glad to get back.

As I took my seat I wondered at the full table, so unusual at the supper-hour. Later I thought I understood it; an exciting theme, whose discussion was not easily to be foregone, had brought them all together.

"Where have you been, Mr. Hatfield?" asked Mr. Witkowski. "We've missed you. Your departure was so sudden and so unannounced it came near being mysterious."

I said in reply that there was nothing very "mysterious" about it. I had wanted for a long time to do a little sight-seeing around Weimar and Eisenach, and this had seemed a good opportunity.

"Why did n't you wait for the holidays?" asked Fräulein Elsa; "they are almost here."

It was a very sensible question. I had not thought of it, but of course they would naturally expect me to defer such little jaunts until the holidays.

"I have something else I want to do during the holidays, Fräulein," I answered with a smile I hoped she would think enigmatical, one portending something pleasant that included herself.

"You've missed Herr Lamprecht's finest lecture—the crux of the course, everyone says," said Beatrice. "I thought of you, and was sorry to have you miss it."

"It's worth missing it to be thought of, is n't it?" I asked with a patent attempt at gallantry. Nevertheless I hoped that she, and she alone, would take it as in earnest.

"Indeed it is; you're a lucky fellow, Mr. Hatfield," interposed Mr. Witkowski. "I would leave tomorrow for the 'uttermost parts,' if I thought Miss Ludlow would miss me."

"Try it, Herr Witkowski," said Herr Lubella quickly. "I'm sure she will."

Everyone laughed, for everyone guessed that Witkowski's absence would be a relief to Lubella, who was openly jealous of Beatrice's evident enjoyment of the brilliant Pole's conversation.

But Beatrice disliked to be the subject of comment, even if it was in the nature of good-humored raillery; therefore she proceeded to put me through a quiz on my late travels compared to which my seminaries were easy. I was thankful enough I had studied my Baedeker to such good purpose, else I would soon have floundered.

Especially when the others all joined in, and I found it necessary to keep a cool head as each dilated upon his own favorite attraction and called upon me for corroboration.

I say all, but the Swede and the Herr Geheimrath did not join in the questioning. Nevertheless they listened with an attention so acute that it seemed to me at times a little suspicious, and once I caught what appeared to be a significant glance exchanged between the two.

It was immediately following this glance that the Herr Geheimrath accosted me with labored carelessness:

"Did you run across your friend, Monsieur de Villa Réal, in your travels, Mr. Hatfield?"

There was an instant silence around the table as everyone turned to hear my answer. What had happened? Was it all out? Was Marcel branded publicly as a spy? Was his flight known? And perhaps my own participation in it? Despite the obviously labored casualness of the Herr Geheimrath's question, I had detected something very like a sneer about his lips and in his eyes. The Herr Geheimrath had never liked me—I do not know why, except that I was an Englishman—no doubt he would be glad to implicate me in Marcel's escape. I felt the blood rush to my temples as I replied, I hoped as casually as the Herr Geheimrath had questioned me:

"De Villa Réal? Has n't he returned yet? He does not usually stay away so long."

"No," said the Herr Geheimrath, "but this time he probably does not intend to return, if he can avoid it."

"Why?" I asked, gazing at him coldly, for I had recovered my equilibrium.

"Because the police and the military authorities are

very anxious for his return, and he does not care to gratify them," sneered the Herr Geheimrath.

I looked puzzled, and Witkowski, with his native courtesy, hastened to relieve my perplexity.

"Our friend de Villa Réal is accused of being a spy," he said, and added deprecatingly: "Of course we none of us believe it; it is all a mistake, but a very terrible one if he should happen to fall into the hands of the German authorities."

I was saved the necessity of perjuring myself by word. I needed only to look my utter unbelief in this statement, for Fräulein Elsa spoke up quickly:

"Speak for yourself, Herr Witkowski. I was always sure he was either a Jew or a spy!"

I could never understand Fräulein Elsa's venom where Marcel was concerned. It flashed across me now that perhaps she was "a woman scorned." Could it be possible?

"Well, Fräulein Elsa, we know he is not a Jew; *ergo* he must be a spy, you think?" said Witkowski with his imperturbable smile, always so goading to Fräulein Elsa. I think, from her expression, she had something spiteful on the tip of her tongue—Fräulein Elsa was quick at repartee—but Frau Pastor interposed with her gentle, "Nein, nein, meine Tochter," and Fräulein Elsa remained silent. Whether she was brought to a better mind by her sweet-voiced mother, or whether she thought it inexpedient to be critical of her mother's ex-boarders, I am not sure.

At Frau Pastor's gentle reproof the subject of Marcel was dropped, to my great relief, but first I had one exquisite glance from Beatrice, a glance of mingled faith

in Marcel and sympathy for me, or so I interpreted it.

In my own room, with the accumulated newspapers of four days around me, I read lurid accounts of the inexplicable escape of an undoubted French spy, with drawings of many notable fortifications and maps of automobile roads and by-roads in his possession. I read, also, a full description of Marcel's appearance appended to an offer of a reward for his capture, and I thanked God from the bottom of my heart for his safety. What I liked better to read were the strictures on Herr Keltowitch, the secret-service man, who had allowed this valuable prize to escape after having, as he supposed, drawn the net securely around him. I took it for granted that Herr Keltowitch was the name of my dark-browed acquaintance in Dresden, and I was quite willing to do a little ungenerous gloating over the thought of his disgrace.

The next morning's papers had more news of Marcel. The motor-car, in which it had been discovered he had fled, had been returned to its owner, forwarded by *vitesse* from Deutz. The report went on to say that the owner, who had never expected to see his car again after he discovered it had been used to aid the escape of a spy, was greatly relieved by its unexpected return. The authorities, on the contrary, were greatly chagrined, for the car had been forwarded from the little village of Deutz, just opposite Cologne, and no doubt de Villa Réal had crossed the Rhine and escaped into Belgium.

These new tidings again started the discussion about Marcel at the dinner-table. Naturally there were many hard things said of him by the *fräuleins* and the Herr Geheimrath, with an occasional one from the Swede.



This incident of the motor-car seemed proof positive of the accusation against Marcel. Even Herr Lubella and the Pole could no longer pretend to doubt, though both of them, out of evident courtesy to me, refrained from any severe strictures. I had said little, only speaking when directly appealed to, but that little, of course, was stoutly in Marcel's behalf. I was revolving in my mind his defense of his calling, and, in my slow way, considering the expediency of promulgating his views as my own, when, to my astonishment, Beatrice broke into the argument, which had grown a little heated, along the exact line of Marcel's reasoning.

"After all, what if he was a spy?" said Beatrice. "He was none the less a patriot and doing for France what every one of us, I hope, would be willing to do for our own country if necessity demanded. I think if it is proved that Monsieur de Villa Réal was a spy, I shall honor and admire him far more than I admired the simple French gentleman he seemed to be. He has certainly risked much for his country; what he has done he has done at the peril of his life; with all my heart I hope he is safe across the border."

She looked so pretty while she was speaking, her dark eyes flashing with generous indignation at the defamers of the absent, a vivid color flaming into the soft rose of her cheek, that she disarmed all criticism. The Pole and the Rumanian cried "Bravo!" with a clapping of hands in which most of us joined. Even the Swede and Fräulein Marta, neither of whom had ever shown themselves particularly friendly toward Marcel, looked at her with admiring eyes; only in the eyes of Fräulein Elsa and the Herr Geheimrath was there something of malevolence,

mingled with an unwilling admiration. As for me, I made a formal speech of thanks to Miss Ludlow in behalf of my friend Monsieur de Villa Réal, and promised that he should hear of her brave defense of him if I ever had a chance to tell him of it.

But if my speech was formal, my feelings were not. I had often been of two minds about Beatrice, at one moment thinking myself in love with her, and the next as vehemently declaring to myself that I was not. Now, at last, I knew. I hardly knew how the revelation had come. It was like a flash of lightning. And the flash had set aflame all my emotions. I wondered if it were possible that I was keeping a sufficiently impassive countenance, while I felt fiery billows seething around me and rolling over me.

Perhaps it is my way to take things a little harder than most men. Now, as I rose to my feet and made my formal adieus—I was in haste to be gone, lest I betray myself—my soul cried out passionately: “Unless she reach out a hand to save me, I am lost!”

## CHAPTER XII

### AT THE CHRISTMAS MARKET

**F**OR the present I saw no sign of an outstretched hand from Beatrice. This was the afternoon of Herr Lamprecht's last lecture before the holidays, for tomorrow would be Christmas Eve. Beatrice and Miss Martin were at the lecture, but so were Baron von Dreidorf and Herr Lubella, the baron looking a little more magnificent than I remembered him. Both were in devoted attendance and there was no chance for me.

But that evening I had an opportunity that did not fall to the lot of the baron, though I shared it with the Pole and the Rumanian. It was Fräulein Elsa who proposed, at the supper-table, that we visit the Christmas market; it was a sight worth seeing if one had never seen it, and Miss Ludlow ought not to miss it.

I was glad to see her so considerate of Beatrice.

On our way to and from lectures we had seen the Augustus Platz and the Promenade lined with booths, sprung out of the street overnight, gaily decorated with Christmas greens and surrounded by a dense pine-forest of Christmas trees. Every article to be found on the inhabitable globe seemed on sale in these booths, from costly furs from Russia and beautiful glass from Bohemia to toys from Nuremberg and home-knit stock-

ings from Saxony. We certainly thought we had seen the Christmas market, and that it was well worth seeing.

But Fraülein Elsa informed us that we had not seen it at all until we had seen Peter-Strasse at night, and I, for one, was glad of any excuse to spend an evening with Beatrice. The Herr Geheimrath excused himself from making one of the party on the plea of an important engagement, but the Swede, much to everyone's astonishment, accepted Fraülein Elsa's invitation with evident pleasure.

That made us an evenly matched party as to numbers, but it was interesting to see each man manœuvre for a place beside Beatrice. It was the Pole who calmly appropriated her at first—he had a way of managing to get what he wanted that I had noticed before—but I thought it would go hard with me if I did not get my turn before the evening was over, and I was quite willing to go on duty with the chaperone for awhile.

In fact, I was beginning to like Miss Martin very well, and I flattered myself that she did not altogether dislike me. From being invariably grim, with the air of trying to keep me at a distance or coldly ignoring me,—the two attitudes being interchangeable in her intercourse with me,—she treated me now either with a jolly kind of chaffing or a simple and direct friendliness. I liked her in both moods, but I particularly liked her in the last.

Now, as we wedged our way through the dense mass of humanity that packed Peter-Strasse from the long line of quaint brick façades on one side of the street to the equally quaint façades on the other, she said to me in more friendly fashion than she had yet shown:

"I wish Mr. Witkowski and Herr Lubella and Baron von Dreidorf would n't be quite so attentive to Beatrice. I don't altogether trust these foreigners."

"Trust them?" I echoed in surprise, for though I knew Miss Martin to be frank to the point of brutality at times, this seemed to me rather an unusual kind of confidence to bestow on me.

"Oh, I don't mean I think they would pick her pockets or try to make away with her, but you know how foreigners are about Americans; they think they are all rich, and to marry an American girl is to insure themselves a competency for life."

"I hope they 're not all so mercenary, Miss Martin," I demurred. I had an uncomfortable feeling that she might be including me among the "foreigners." "I believe Mr. Witkowski and Herr Lubella, at least, are honestly interested in Miss Ludlow. I have not seen as much of the baron. I can't judge so well of him."

"Oh, of course. Who would n't be interested? She's pretty and attractive, I think. But they would never have a serious thought about her if they did n't think she had plenty of money. And she has n't! Not more than enough to comfortably take care of herself."

I was silent for a moment, and I had a good excuse for my silence. We had come into the middle of a crowd of street-merchants chanting the excellence of their wares with high-voiced cries. The crowd had been noisy enough before, with their confetti and feather "ticklers" and gay shouting and laughter, but here the din was deafening—there was every excuse for not attempting an answer.

I was glad of the excuse, for I was thinking rapidly:

Is Miss Martin giving me to understand that if I have been cherishing any "serious intentions" toward Beatrice on the ground of her supposed wealth, I can give them up? It was most kind of Miss Martin! I felt myself growing hot with a curious kind of indignation; curious because—and I grew hotter still as I realized it—my indignation was mingled with a sense of disappointment. I, too, then, was one of those suitors Miss Martin scorned for counting on Beatrice's money! Perhaps she had guessed it and had taken this way—which, after all, was kindly—to disabuse my mind. I had often chafed at the fortuneless fate of a younger son, but never so bitterly as at this moment. I well knew that my father, who was kindness itself in all ordinary dealings with me, expected me to marry money, and would be bitterly disappointed if I did not. Hatfield Abbey was a great place, a show-place, and Harold would need all the family money to keep it up. I would have a little money coming to me from my mother, but hardly enough to keep me in comfortable bachelor state—most of my mother's money, also, had been settled on Harold.

I do not know why I should have taken it for granted that Beatrice had money, except that she had the air. Always well-dressed, expensively, as even a man could readily judge, there was about her, also, that elusive atmosphere of never being obliged to consider money that belongs to the super-rich. So I was no more in Miss Martin's eyes than a "foreign fortune-hunter"! What was I in Beatrice's eyes? What was I in my own?

But there had been another cause for vague discomfort in Miss Martin's speech. Evidently she regarded

the attentions of the Pole, the Rumanian, and the baron as serious. Had she reason for so regarding them? It was this part of her speech to which I replied when we managed to get beyond the din of the little group of street-vendors. Of course I pretended to chaff her:

"So Mr. Witkowski, Mr. Lubella, and the baron are serious, are they? Which one, please, does Miss Ludlow favor?"

"None," she replied with a little touch of her old grimness. "Beatrice has too much good sense, I hope, to fall in love with any one not of her own race."

After that I dismissed my sense of discomfort. I would take time to quietly think over the condition of my affairs,—whether I dared ask Beatrice to share a younger son's portion,—and meanwhile would worry no longer about the other "foreigners." Miss Martin had not said that she hoped Beatrice would fall in love with an American, but with one of "her own race." Were not Beatrice and I both Anglo-Saxons?

It was at this moment that I caught sight of the Herr Geheimrath and Herr Keltowitch. I think the Herr Geheimrath had seen us and did not wish to be recognized. He was on the other side of the street and evidently was trying to keep the crowd between us and him. I lost sight of him immediately, and did not see him again that evening. But my glimpse of him had aroused a vague feeling of uneasiness. This, then, was the Herr Geheimrath's engagement! Why was he so deep in consultation with the agent of the secret service? Had he brought him to Peter-Strasse to point out our party to him? And, if so, which one of us did he wish kept under surveillance? I was convinced that

it was either Beatrice or I. Why Beatrice should be under suspicion I could not conceive, but with all my heart I hoped it was I. No doubt the Herr Geheimrath believed I had assisted in Marcel's escape; perhaps he took me, also, for a spy.

I glanced at Beatrice, who was a little ahead of me. I wanted to discover if she had seen and recognized the man she seemed to dread in Dresden. Evidently she had not. She was talking gaily with the man at her side who, by some process of shifting, was now Herr Lubella and not the Pole. Very well; if they were taking turns it should be my turn soon.

It was only a few minutes later that I saw Herr Keltowitch coming toward us through the throng, this time alone. His eyes were fixed on Beatrice with that same bold stare that I had so disliked in Dresden, the stare that Beatrice had shrunk from in such terror. There was more than simple, brazen insolence in that stare, I believed. I began to think its brazenness was a mask for something sinister and baleful; it affected me as might the basilisk eyes of some hateful snake. I saw Beatrice, feeling his eyes upon her, glance up and shudder, as she had shuddered once before in Dresden. Keltowitch seemed to understand her signs of emotion and to enjoy them. His lips curled slightly and his eyes narrowed in what I could only denominate as a leer, and once more Beatrice shuddered violently.

Lubella saw the shudder, turned quickly to ascertain its cause, and met the man's insolent gaze. In an instant he flamed into wrath, hastily excused himself to Beatrice and stepped up to the man. What he said to him I could not hear, but I could see his threatening gesture



and note Keltowitch's derisive sneer in response. It would have been my way, it would have been any Englishman's way, to ignore a creature like Keltowitch, in order to avoid a scene, at all hazards, where a woman was involved. I shrank at the thought of Beatrice being mixed up in a common street-brawl, and started toward her to try, if possible, to get her away. Miss Martin had slipped up to her side as Herr Lubella left her. Now, as I went forward, I saw a sudden change come over the face of the secret-service man. His sneer vanished and something like abject fear took its place, while he swiftly wormed his way through the crowd, past Lubella, past Beatrice, and past me. It was not Herr Lubella who had suddenly cowed the man; of that I felt confident. I turned quickly and glanced behind to seek an explanation. Just back of me stood Baron von Dreidorf, waiting for Keltowitch, whom he had evidently summoned to him. He was so near that I easily overheard what he said as Keltowitch came up to him, though his voice was not raised and all around us rose the murmur of an excited throng who had witnessed the altercation between Keltowitch and Lubella.

"What do you mean, sir?" The baron spoke in a voice like steel cutting steel. "It is not a part of the service to molest ladies. You will report at headquarters tomorrow morning."

As Keltowitch saluted and slunk away I stepped quickly to Beatrice's side. I wished to get ahead of Lubella, who was still standing, bewildered in his beautiful, long-lashed eyes, gazing after the retreating Keltowitch.

I wanted to get ahead of the baron, too, for I did not

doubt he would come forward and speak to Beatrice as soon as he had disposed of Keltowitch. I was not mistaken; in a moment I heard him at my elbow, speaking around me to Beatrice and Miss Martin, and expressing in most courteous fashion his regret for their annoyance. Beatrice was securely sandwiched between Miss Martin and me. I would not yield an inch to the baron, and so, after talking gaily across me for a few minutes, and, incidentally, making a way for us through the crowd, which fell away respectfully, for they evidently knew him, he made his adieus.

"Till the New Year," he said. "I leave for Dresden to-night."

"So soon?" asked Beatrice, with something like regret in her voice. "I thought you were to be at dinner at Herr Feronce's tomorrow evening."

"I had expected to be, and I greatly regret missing it, but I find I must be in Dresden tomorrow morning. I hope to see you early in 1914." The baron made his courtly bow with clicked heels as he spoke.

Beatrice did not echo this wish, but she smiled and said *Auf wiedersehen* in a way that I was sure must have been encouraging to the baron, if he was cherishing any of those hopes accredited him by Miss Martin. I wondered if this affair with Herr Keltowitch was hurrying him off to Dresden; if those headquarters, to which he had ordered the secret-service man to report, were in Dresden and not in Leipzig. If so, more than ever was I convinced that the baron was a thorough gentleman. He had given no hint to Beatrice of the nature of the business calling him so suddenly to Dresden, and yet that business was hers, and this was the second time

he had intervened to save her from annoyance. She might be won by gratitude, even if the baron were not of her race, for she had good reason to be grateful to him.

"I see you believe in Scripture: 'The first shall be last and the last first,' " the Pole murmured in my ear as he slipped behind me to relieve me of Miss Martin and left me alone with Beatrice.

I was as much alone with her in that dense crowd as if we had been alone in the Thuringian Forest, for none could overhear what we said. We were soon separated from the rest of our party by a solid phalanx of noisy merrymakers, and though I had to bend to her ear to make myself heard or to hear, we could both of us say what we pleased without fear of eavesdroppers.

"You need not answer yes or no," said Beatrice, glancing up at me suddenly, apropos of nothing, for we had been laughing at the pantomime between a young German girl and her bashful lover just ahead of us, "but I'm very sure you *were* with Monsieur de Villa Réal."

I hesitated just a moment; then I knew I could trust her. One could not look into those frank, true eyes without trusting them.

"Yes, I was. How did you know?"

"I felt it; I was sure of it. Is he safe?"

"Yes. I had a telegram from him from Liège."

"How did he dare telegraph you? Won't you be suspected?"

"Not on account of that telegram. It was from 'John Carter.' But I rather think the Herr Geheimrath suspects me, and has ordered your Dresden friend to look out for me."

"My Dresden friend?" I think for a moment she believed I meant the baron, and was shocked at the idea.

"Yes; the man you dreaded in Dresden and who made himself so disagreeable again to-night. He is the secret-service agent, Herr Keltowitch, that the papers have been blaming for Monsieur de Villa Réal's escape."

"Oh!" And then, as she slowly realized it, "Oh!" again, with a strong shudder. "I hope you will not fall into his clutches, Mr. Hatfield. I could not bear it. He is *horrible!*"

"Yes, I think he is, but I am more afraid of his annoying you."

"Why, he cannot hurt us. Besides—" and then she hesitated, as if she rather hated to conclude what she had begun.

"Besides what?" I encouraged.

"We will soon be out of his reach."

"Out of his reach?" I did not understand.

"Yes; we leave for Rome the second of January."

"Oh!" was all I could say. I think Beatrice knew it was a cry of pain. She looked up quickly, embarrassed but trying to cover her embarrassment by hurried speech.

"We have not told anyone yet, so don't refer to it, please. They talk so much at the pension."

"But you said you were going in February," I remonstrated, "and I was hoping I could persuade you to stay until spring. I was hoping we could arrange some parties to Weimar and the Thuringian Forest."

I knew I was speaking like a school-boy, stumbling over my sentences like a boy who has been hurt and does

not know what he is saying. I think she recognized my hurt and was sorry for it.

"Yes," she said gently, "I would like to stay. I have been very happy in Germany, but this damp, cold weather does not agree with Miss Martin. We must go south as soon as possible."

Somehow I did not believe it was Miss Martin's health—she had shown no signs of anything but the most robust vigor—I believed it was Miss Martin's scheme to get Beatrice away from the "serious attentions" of the "foreigners."

I was silent a moment, and then I made a swift resolution. There were ten days left. I should see Beatrice every one of those days—and much could happen in ten days.

## CHAPTER XIII

"NO, HUGH"

**Y**ET at the end of the ten days, though much had happened, it had not all happened as I had willed. When I had made that swift resolution I had said to myself: "Younger son or not, I will win Beatrice. Other men have earned a living for the women they love, carved a fortune out of nothing, and so will I."

But one may make such brave resolutions in a moment of exaltation, and then weaken when sober second thought puts one to the proof. If I had been earning a living, if I had carved the beginnings of my fortune, then I might dare. Love urged me on; prudence bade me wait. To ask the woman I loved to share the privations that must be borne while my fortune was in the making, seemed unmanly; to ask her to wait until it was made, seemed colossal presumption. I had little sleep for the next few nights, tossing for long hours in feverish planning as to how to make a sudden competency. It was well there were no lectures to be attended, for every waking moment of my thoughts was filled with one theme and my note-book must have suffered.

But though I endured agonies of indecision while away from Beatrice, the hours I spent with her in those last few days in Leipzig were happiness unalloyed. Perhaps

because she knew she would so soon have Beatrice beyond danger, Miss Martin seemed to remove all restrictions during these last days. That is, where I was concerned, for I believe she was as much of a watch-dog as ever in the case of the Pole and the Rumanian.

I, also, had been invited to that Christmas Eve dinner at the Villa Feronce, the one the baron had been compelled to forgo by his sudden departure. Beatrice gave no evidence of missing the baron, but then, I suppose she would not have been likely to betray herself if she did miss him. She looked, if possible, more beautiful than she had looked at the first dinner, and she sang divinely. I found myself wondering why, with such a voice, she should spend her time in dry and fusty classrooms. I knew, however, that she was keeping up her musical studies at the conservatory, in addition to her lectures at the university, and it began to seem quite incomprehensible to me, in the light of my previous knowledge of young women, that one so young, so charming, so beautiful, with such a wonderful gift of song, should also have the mental endowment such as Beatrice undoubtedly possessed. I had heard her chattering French and German with the ease of one born to those tongues; no doubt she had other languages at her command. And then I found myself thinking—and growing furiously hot at the thought—with such accomplishments and brains what a wife for a diplomat!

I was glad to have a Christmas in Germany. They know how to celebrate it better than we do. They have more of the real Christ-child spirit in their manner of celebration. We had had our Christmas tree early at the pension for the benefit of Miss Martin, Beatrice and

me, since we were "invited," as the Germans phrase it, and we had a second noble tree at Herr Feronce's. Around each tree, sparkling with myriads of candles and loaded with gifts, we had sung "Heilige Nacht"; and the thought of the countless thousands of homes throughout Germany, where at that moment the beautiful hymn was rising to the stars, thrilled me with something better than the spirit of revelry I had heretofore associated with such occasions. Every lonely spinster and every forlorn bachelor in the land, they told me, was singing "Heilige Nacht" around their bits of trees in their bare rooms on Christmas Eve. There is something very simple, very beautiful, very *homely* in the German character.

I had sent the finest toy I could find to Herr Feronce's little boy; flowers to Frau Feronce, Fräulein Feronce, Frau Pastor, Miss Martin, and Beatrice; boxes of bonbons to Fräuleins Marta and Elsa; a gold piece to the tiny maid, Gretchen, and as a result found my finances at rather low ebb, I would have to write home for supplies. I was sorry I had not written earlier, for I would have much liked to do something worth while to entertain Miss Martin and Beatrice before their departure. But a theater-party and supper afterward at "The Français" or "The Auerbach," with the inevitable oysters and champagne, was not to be thought of in the present state of my finances. Instead, I had them up to my rooms for tea. A poor little function, but despite my nervousness as host,—I believe a man is always nervous when he entertains, though women never seem to be—I enjoyed my party. So, I trust, did my guests. We fell into a more intimate conversation, as it grew



darker outside and the lamps burned more brightly within, than I had yet had with them. I had offered them cigarettes; Miss Martin was shocked, Beatrice laughed.

"It's a pretty and graceful accomplishment as I've seen it abroad, but I have never taken it up," she said. "When I left home only a few of the girls we didn't quite approve of were smoking. Now, I hear, they're all doing it. I will be quite an old foggy when I go back."

"I hope you'll always be an old foggy, then, if not smoking makes you one," said Miss Martin grimly. "Mr. Hatfield, I'm mid-Victorian; which is the last word of reproach with some people. I think it means that I'm sufficiently conservative not to be carried off my feet by every new fad and fancy; but you never can make people who ridicule everything mid-Victorian believe that. What is the art of Daubigny, Corot, Millais, and Burne-Jones? Mid-Victorian! Not to be compared with the cubists and futurists of today. What is the literature of Thackeray, George Eliot, Meredith, Henry James, Browning, Tennyson, and all the other giants? Mid-Victorian! Not to be named in the same breath with the writers of the ephemeral trash of today."

Miss Martin stopped for breath, and Beatrice and I applauded.

"Miss Martin is riding her hobby-horse, Mr. Hatfield," said Beatrice, with a jolly, chaffing smile at Miss Martin. "I really think the iron has entered her soul, and every time anyone intimates she is mid-Victorian, he gives the iron a twist."

"That 's true," said Miss Martin, returning Beatrice's smile with another as jolly. "I *hate* to be called mid-Victorian, and yet I believe mid-Victorian stands for most that is solid, worth while and respectable in art, literature, and manners."

"I more than half agree with you," I began, but Miss Martin was too full of her theme to notice any interruption.

"The tolerant smile with which the youngsters of to-day listen to a woman of my years is *maddening*. I can't recall, when I was young, that we girls reproached our mothers with being *early*-Victorian, or received their opinions with a tolerant smile of *superiority*."

"I know exactly how you feel, Miss Martin," I interpolated, as she stopped for breath a second time. "I know of nothing more irritating than a tolerant smile. Why do you suppose Fräulein Marta and Fräulein Elsa bestow one on everything I say? You 've noticed it, have n't you?"

"Yes, I 've noticed it, and I 've also wondered why."

"It 's because you 're English, of course," Beatrice volunteered. "Have n't you discovered yet that all good Germans,—most of them, that is,—are full of venom toward the English?"

"Now I think of it, I believe you are right. There are exceptions, of course, like the Feronces and Baron von Dreidorf, but I believe most of them are like the Herr Geheimrath, and I can't understand the reason for it. We have no such feeling in England toward the Germans."

"Don't you understand?" Miss Martin spoke quickly. "Have n't you read Bernhardi's book?"

"Oh, Bernhardi! Yes. But I don't believe Bernhardi represents the sentiment of the German people. I'm convinced he is slightly crack-brained."

"I'd like to think it, but I'm not so sure," answered Miss Martin, with a vindictive shake of her head. It was hard for her to make any excuses for Bernhardi.

Before my party was over we had so far progressed in friendliness that I ventured to prefer a request I had wanted to make for several days, in fact ever since I had heard of their impending departure. The weather had turned crisp and clear, ideal for a walk in the Rosenthal. Miss Ludlow was no German *fräulein*; there could be no impropriety in her taking such a walk with me, unchaperoned. Provided, of course, Miss Martin thought there was none. I most vehemently did not want Miss Martin to be of the party; most ardently I longed for this one opportunity alone with Beatrice. Yet how I was to make my request without seeming discourtesy in not including Miss Martin, I could not see. I might suggest to her that I feared it would be too much of a walk for her, but she was such a vigorous old lady—not so very old, either—that I had no doubt she could outwalk either Beatrice or me. I was so agitated over this small problem that I fear I may have seemed distraught, and perhaps it was my absent manner that suggested to Miss Martin that it was time for them to be taking their leave.

Her movement to go made me desperate. It was now or never, and I blurted out my request in the simplest and most direct fashion, which, after all, was perhaps the best way. We were all on our feet when I managed to get it out.

“This is great weather for walking, Miss Martin. Will you let me have Miss Ludlow for a walk in the Rosenthal tomorrow morning, if the weather is still fine and she is willing to go with me?”

Miss Martin hesitated a moment. Then she looked up at me with a sympathetic twinkle in her sharp, gray eyes.

“Unchaperoned, I suppose?”

“Yes, if you please,” I answered boldly.

“Well, ‘seein’ it ‘s you’”—one of her Yankeeisms—

“I don’t mind, if *Beatrice* does n’t.”

“Do you ‘mind,’ Miss Ludlow?”

“If I say ‘yes,’ I suppose that means I won’t go?”

“I suppose it does.”

“Then I ‘ll say ‘no.’ What time?”

“Will ten be too early?”

Ten was all right and promptly at that hour next morning I tapped at Miss Martin’s door. Beatrice was ready, wearing a becoming little fur toque of soft sable, a short walking-suit of hunter’s green cloth, sable-trimmed, a huge muff, and high walking-boots. I’ve heard that it’s the American bootmakers who give all American women the effect of having beautiful feet, and that no American woman will wear a boot not made at home. I don’t see how they can produce the illusion of a perfectly arched instep, if it is not there, but certainly Beatrice’s boots fitted like gloves to feet that seemed too small and pretty to carry her with such perfect elasticity of gait and with no hint of weariness.

We walked many miles through the winding drives and walks of the Rosenthal, snow under our feet, snow on the branches overhead, and a brilliant winter sun

on the snow. It was such a winter's day as is rare in Germany, and because of its beauty and because it was the holiday season, all Leipzig seemed to have sought the Rosenthal. The ponds were full of skaters, the sharp ring of steel on ice mingling its music with the music of happy laughter; the drives were gay with motors and foreign-looking sleighs; boys and men were skeeing and coasting on the hills; even the quiet woodland walks were not deserted.

The woods of the Rosenthal are very beautiful, even in winter. Though I do not know why I say "even"; the tender green of April foliage and the luxuriant bosage of June are not more beautiful than the tracery of gray stems and twigs against a gray sky; or the soft, white, plummy tips of snow-laden branches under a brilliant winter sun.

I'm not sure Beatrice would have wandered off with me into that lonely woodland path, if she had noticed what she was doing. But I was using guile with her. I had drawn her on to tell me of her home-life in America, and she had grown so full of her theme—she found me a most intent and sympathetic listener—that I led her into the woodland path without her perceiving for awhile where she had come. I think she was a little startled when she did discover it, and had half a mind to turn back to the comfortable chaperonage of the people. But the path itself was so enticing, as wildly picturesque as if we had been in the heart of the great forest, winding down the side of a hill to a little ravine through which a tiny brook dashed merrily, that she could not resist it. Under the trees were many spots where the ground was bare of snow, and brilliant green

moss showed its tiny cups; or speckled leaves of partridge-vine made cozy nests for its scarlet berries; or feathery tips of ground-spruce stood up crisp and green from a bed of snow, and long sprays of Christmas pine crept close to the ground or covered some old, gray rock with graceful garlands. They were all old favorites of Beatrice's in the woods at home, she said, and she gloated over every new discovery as a miser over his gold.

At intervals along our path rustic seats had been placed for the convenience of the tired wayfarer, and two of these were occupied by young Germans and their "brides," as the German calls the girl to whom he is engaged. At least I took it for granted that they were engaged couples, for they were evidently of that respectable class that does not permit a young girl to be alone with a man unless she is engaged to him, and they were as frankly affectionate as young German couples often are in public.

As we came upon the first pair, Beatrice swiftly dropped her eyes, and I could see the bright color rush to her temples. She did not pretend to see them. But when we came upon the second, she glanced at them and then at me, and though the swift color mantled her face again, she bravely met my challenging glance of mingled sympathy and amusement.

Deeper in the woods we came upon a seat at a particularly picturesque spot.

"Shall we sit down and rest a few minutes?" I asked.

"Oh, I'm not tired," Beatrice answered quickly, looking a little startled, as if she was not sure, in Germany, just what my invitation might involve.

"No, I suppose not; but you may be before we get

back to the tram. I think we may as well rest while we have a chance."

Now I had been thinking while Beatrice had been talking of her home-life what a strange thing love is. Here was I, madly in love with a girl about whose antecedents I knew absolutely nothing. I had never even thought of her antecedents or her present circumstances. For all I knew there might be a very objectionable father and mother, and a horde of unattractive brothers and sisters in that dim and shadowy American environment out of which she had come. Of course, if I had thought of it at all, I would have known very well that one cannot gather grapes of a thistle, and, Beatrice being what she was, her forebears must have been gentlemen and gentlewomen. Nevertheless I was glad to learn about her life; my father would wish to know of it if it ever came to a question of marriage with Beatrice. Her home-life, as she painted it, on an old Kentucky plantation impoverished by the war, but still maintaining a little of the old southern dignity of living, was very attractive. I saw the scholarly father, with the courtly manners of the old régime, and the beautiful young mother reigning brilliantly in her home and in society through Beatrice's eyes, and the picture may have been more highly colored than she was aware, but it looked most attractive to me. She barely touched on the great tragedy of her life—even after nine years she could not speak of it with composure—when her father and mother had been killed in one of those frightful American railroad disasters. She was only a child of eleven at the time, and the years since then had been spent at school or abroad with Miss Martin, occasionally

returning to open the old home—which she still dearly loved—for a house-party of friends.

There were many things in this recital which touched me deeply, and, by a paradox, those very things gave me much comfort. She had been a lonely child, but there were no unreasonable relatives to be consulted in determining Beatrice's future. My heart bled for the child so suddenly bereft of her parents in such a frightful way, but no hideous disease, no tubercular trouble or other fearful taint had left Beatrice a dreaded heredity when she was thus early orphaned. The way was clear; it all lay with me, now, to decide whether I could make a living for her and then if possible go ahead and win her.

My brain teeming with these thoughts as we sat on the little rustic bench, I hardly heard during the first few minutes what Beatrice was talking about. I was making the most perfunctory answers, and it seems I must have become a little mixed. For I was suddenly brought to my senses by Beatrice saying, coldly:

"‘Yes!’ I should have expected you to say ‘no,’ Mr. Hatfield."

"Then I'll say ‘no’," I answered quickly. "But forgive me; I did not hear your question, and I answered at random. Please ask me over again."

"Oh, it was nothing of any consequence."

"But it is of consequence—to me; repeat it, I beg of you."

Beatrice, however, was clearly offended; nothing would induce her to repeat the question to which I had made the unfortunate answer. Instead, she rose to her feet.



"Shall we be going home, Mr. Hatfield? I am quite rested."

I sprang to my feet also, and seized her hand.

"Sit down, Beatrice, I have something to say to you," I said, and even to myself my voice sounded stern, though sternness was far from my feeling. I did not realize that I had called her "Beatrice." I saw her look up at me startled and indignant, but there must have been something compelling in my eyes, for she slowly sat down again and did not try to draw away her hand.

"Beatrice"—my voice still sounded harsh to me, but it was only because I was making such an effort to control it—"I have nothing in the world to offer you; I am the poorest of younger sons, but I cannot let you leave Leipzig without telling you that I love you. And if the day ever comes when I dare, when I have more than a mere pittance to offer you, I shall ask you to marry me."

She started to say something, but I would not let her speak.

"No, I have not asked you, and so you can't refuse me. I don't even ask you to wait for me. If some other man comes whom you can love and who has more to offer you, you are not bound to me by the slightest tie. I only demand the right to tell you that I love you."

I crushed her hand fiercely as I spoke, though I did not appreciate it until I saw her wince.

"Oh, forgive me!" I cried remorsefully, letting go her hand. "I have said what I had to say; I am ready to go."

"But I am not," said Beatrice, looking up at me with steadfast, shining eyes, and a beautiful color blazing in

her cheeks. "I want you to forget what you have said, Mr. Hatfield. I am going away; you will soon forget me. You will meet many lovely English girls with money, such as a younger son *ought* to marry. Then you may be sorry you have yielded to this impulse. I want you to forget that you have ever said the words you have just spoken." Impulsively and sweetly she put out her hand. I seized it and carried it to my lips.

"Beatrice, Beatrice!" I groaned. "I don't want to forget; I don't want any English girl; I don't want her money; I want *you*! Oh, I never before knew the bitterness of our primogeniture and entail. If I could but share with my brother, I could try to make you love me. Beatrice! Beatrice! I *can't* give you up."

I think she was sorry for me. There were tears in her eyes, but she spoke very steadily:

"We have been good friends, Mr. Hatfield, and I want to remain good friends. I would be sorry to lose your friendship. You must forget all this, and then we can remain as good friends as ever—and better."

"Do you mean you will not remain my friend if I keep on loving you, Beatrice?" I demanded.

She was a long time in answering, and as she sat quietly beside me, her hand in mine, her eyes on the ground, thinking, I devoured every lovely line and exquisite bit of color in the beautiful face that two days hence would be lost to me.

But at last, with something almost like a sigh, she lifted her eyes and looked into mine, and there was a little smile in her eyes:

"No, Hugh," she said gently.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE REWARD OF VIRTUE

I WAS startled by a loud snort directly in my ear. I turned abruptly. At my elbow was Miss Martin, her face scarlet with confusion.

"Oh, I *beg* your pardon. I *did* n't mean to do that, but I *really* could n't help it," she murmured quickly, for my ears alone.

I believe she really could n't help it, for I had discovered that under her sometimes gruff exterior Miss Martin was truly amiable. But one could hardly be blamed for being overcome with laughter, or contempt, or whatever it was that had produced Miss Martin's snort, at the sight of a handsome young fellow sobbing aloud in a public railroad-station because a young lady in whom he was interested was leaving the city. It was a most un-English sight and, I have no doubt, an un-American one, also.

Beatrice was doing her best to take no notice of Herr Lubella's extravagant grief, but her color was steadily rising and it must have been a trying ordeal for her. For there were gathered to see her off the two fräuleins, one of them, at least, openly ridiculing the young Rumanian; the debonair Pole, feeling Beatrice's departure quite as keenly as Lubella, but witty to the last; the stolid Swede, the keen-eyed Herr Geheimrath, the im-

passive—I hope I was impassive—Englishman, and the courtly Herr Feronce with his sister and wife. It was rather trying to be the object of such impassioned grief before such an assembly, and I forgave Miss Martin her snort.

Yet I was sorry for the young fellow, for though I did not believe his suffering could be compared with mine, as I did not believe his feeling for Beatrice had either the depth or vital quality of mine, still I believed it to be genuine for the time being.

Every man, including Herr Feronce, had brought a parting gift of flowers, and Beatrice stood, her arms full of beautiful blossoms, a goddess of spring far lovelier than Botticelli's. I, knowing the pretty custom of the Germans to speed the parting guest with elaborate bouquets, had brought no flowers. I had brought books and bonbons instead, hoping my gifts would last longer and keep me longer in remembrance. But I could not give such heavy things to Beatrice until she was in her seat in her compartment, and I stood awkwardly holding them, thoroughly uncomfortable at this trying farewell reception Beatrice was holding, and longing for it to be well over.

At the last moment up came Baron von Dreidorf, evidently in a great hurry, but still magnificent to look upon. He had arrived in Leipzig an hour before, and had just heard of the departure. I wondered how, and whether Beatrice had sent him word. He had had time, or had taken it, to purchase a more gorgeous bunch of roses than anyone else had brought, and while displaying no unmanly signs of emotion, he was evidently greatly disturbed. I overheard him reproaching Beatrice be-

cause she had not told him of her plans before he left Leipzig, and though I tried not to listen, it made me happy to learn that I was the only one in whom she had confided.

I overheard something else, which did not make me quite so happy. I heard the baron demand Beatrice's address in Rome and heard her give it to him. Then the train rolled up, the guards hustled Miss Martin and Beatrice into their reserved compartment, I put my books and candy-boxes on the seat beside them, there was a chorus of farewells, and I had the last hand-clasp.

I was glad it was all over. We stood talking together for a few minutes, a bereft company, and it was amusing to note the veneration, amounting to awe, on the countenances of the two *fräuleins*, the Herr Geheimrath, and even Herr Lubella as they gazed at the splendor of the baron.

The Frau Feronce had invited the baron and me to a "consolation" dinner that evening, and as it lacked two full hours of time to dress, the baron asked me to spend the interval in his rooms at the Hotel Hauffe. I wanted to refuse. For the moment there was nothing I so longed to do as to get away by myself, think over the four months of my acquaintance with Beatrice, and determine on my future. But later I had good reason to be grateful that in those two hours, spent in friendly conversation in the baron's rooms, our mere acquaintance ripened into a sort of intimacy. By tacit agreement neither of us spoke of Beatrice, but we discussed the relations between our countries in a more friendly spirit than I had ever met with from any German.

We began by discussing Herr Keltowitch.

"It is such men as Keltowitch," declared the baron, "who give us a bad name among other nations. He not only bungled the affair of the French spy and allowed him to escape, but he immediately fell into a worse blunder by suspecting Miss Ludlow and making himself intensely disagreeable to her."

"Do you think he took her for a spy?"

"I think so; else why his persecution?"

"I fancied he was attracted by Miss Ludlow's beauty and took that way of presenting himself to her regard. No doubt he considers himself irresistible, if he can only secure sufficient notice."

"Keltowitch! Good Lord!"

Under the stress of such a novel idea the baron took his cigar from his mouth, blew a few rings of smoke about his head, which gave him an even more Olympian aspect, and turned to me abruptly.

"Do you know the Herr Geheimrath von Blarcom?"

"Slightly; we take our meals at the same pension."

"What have you done to him that should put you in his black looks?"

"Nothing. Why?"

"Well, I heard in Dresden that you were suspected of being an English spy. I roared at the idea. I told the authorities I knew you slightly, and that you were about as far from my idea of a spy as well could be."

The baron made his speech with the greatest bonhomie. Nevertheless I encountered one lightning-like flash from his blue eyes that looked very much as if he might not be altogether free from suspicion and was taking this method of testing me. I tried to receive his speech

with as natural a laugh as his had been in making it, but I fear I was not as perfect an actor as the baron, and the thought of his possible suspicion sent the blood racing to my face. That is one of the uncomfortable things about being fair—the blood lies too near the surface.

"Thank you, Baron," I said, "for standing as my friend in high quarters. But tell me, please, why is it we hear so much more of spies and spying in Germany than we do in England? I do not remember ever having seen or heard of a German over there who was suspected of being a spy."

The baron was silent, as if revolving his answer in his own mind. When he spoke at last, he spoke deliberately:

"I am going to be very frank with you, Mr. Hatfield, because I like you and because I like the English, that is, what I have seen of them. I am not one of those Germans—I confess there are some among my countrymen—who hate the English and view their simplest acts with suspicion. I think I understand the English; I think they err on the side of simplicity rather than on that of deep-dyed duplicity, as some of our writers would have us think. I believe that the intentions of England toward Germany and toward every other nation are, in the main, thoroughly honorable. They are more; they are even altruistic. And, being themselves most honorable, they do not suspect others. Sometimes I think it would be better for them, safer, if they were a little more suspicious of the motives of their neighbors. It does not always do for a high-minded man to judge others entirely by his own standards.

"Understand me," he hastened to add, as I began to

speak, "I am not accusing my people, as a nation, of being more suspicious or less high-minded than you English, but I believe that there are a few of us that have become imbued with the Machiavellian ideas of some of our writers."

This speech of the baron's presented him to me in so fine an aspect that from that moment I liked and trusted him.

When, a half hour later, I started to go, he said to me suddenly:

"What are your plans, Mr. Hatfield? Do you intend to remain in Leipzig?"

"I had intended spending the winter here," I answered, wondering a little at the brusqueness of the question in one usually so suave, but believing he had a motive in asking it. "I'm not so sure now; I'm thinking of applying for a post."

"What kind of a post, if I may venture the liberty?"

"Something connected with diplomacy. That is my line, or I hope it will be."

"Nothing could be finer. I believe, if I were you and intended to enter diplomacy, I would get to work at once. These are interesting days; the world will not soon see their like again. And, by the way, I would be a little on my guard with the Herr Geheimrath."

I had occasion to remember these last words many times in the next three weeks. It seemed to me the Herr Geheimrath dogged my steps. I met him on my way to lectures and on my return. Did I go to the library to read, sooner or later he turned up at a nearby table. Did I determine on a stroll in the Connewitz woods, the Herr Geheimrath apparently determined on one, too;



and the remarkable thing was that, up to this time, I never remembered having met him except at the pension table.

It became so annoying at last that I passed him with the curtest of nods when we met and my salutations at the pension were of the briefest. But there was relief in sight.

I had written my father the night Beatrice left for Rome that I did not want to study any longer. My course with Herr Lamprecht would be over by the first of February, and if he could find me some kind of a post with a salary, I wanted to go to work. I had my own way to make in the world; I did not want to delay beginning to make it. I had received letters in reply from both my father and Harold telling me not to be in a hurry, I was young enough yet, but I had written again of my firm intention to go to work, and if they could not find a place for me, I would find one for myself.

On the twenty-second of January I received a hurried note from my father telling me that I had been appointed as substitute for one of the attachés in the embassy at Rome who had been called home on business that would probably keep him there for a few months. My father also named the amount of my salary, which though small enough, when added to my allowance seemed almost sufficient to permit my thinking of marriage. Every cent of it should be saved, I said to myself, to lay the foundation of that fortune I was determined to carve for Beatrice.

That I was elated by the contents of this letter would be putting it mildly. My spirits soared on wings. The world lay in the palm of my hand, a small nut easy to

crack. And that Rome should have been the court to which I was accredited seemed to me to indicate the direct interposition of the gods. Rome and Beatrice were, for me, synonymous terms. Since the fates were fighting for me, I would be a poltroon, indeed, not to dash forward and win.

January in Germany had been gray and dull with a raw chilliness in the air that penetrated the bones. For a month I had caught only rare glimpses of the sun hanging low, just above the roofs across the Platz—had Beatrice carried all the sunshine away with her? The long day's trip to Munich was to prove a stern test of fortitude, with the hours that stretched between Beatrice and me looming ahead interminably. A monotonous drizzle drenched the already sodden earth and blurred the windows of the compartment, shutting one in to the deadly companionship of shivering fellow-travelers. We left Munich late in the evening for the through run to Rome, and to close one's eyes at night on this dreary gray world, and to open them in the early dawn on hillsides mantled in the silvery green of olive groves and valleys carpeted in the vivid green of springing corn; to watch the gray dawn brighten to dazzling sunshine and deep blue skies, was to pass from Earth to Paradise—from Germany to Italy.

My hotel was on the slopes of the Pincio, and one glimpse from my bedroom window gave me a panorama of Rome, topped by its great dome in the west, that took my breath away. I knew that I ought to call at the embassy and report myself as ready for duty, but all Rome was calling me, and my spirit responded with an eagerness that chafed at the thought of any delay.

Moreover, I was in haste to find Beatrice. To be an hour in Rome and not to see her seemed to me an incredible waste of time. But I listened to the voice of conscience, and virtue had its reward in an invitation to dinner that evening at the ambassador's. Not that an invitation to dinner is necessarily so greatly to be prized, but there are dinners and dinners.

By the time I was free to do as I pleased it was almost the hour for the Pincio—which my ambassador had said I must not miss—so Rome the eternal would have to wait on modern Rome. And it was not hard to let it wait, since the ambassador had assured me that every woman in Rome, native or foreign, beautiful or otherwise, if she owned or could hire carriage or motor-car, would be on the Pincio taking the air at that hour.

My way lay up the Spanish Stairs, and at the foot of them I stopped, ravished. I had stepped from mid-winter into mid-May. The flower market was a bower of bloom to entice the last coin from a man's pocket. I bought great branches of peach and cherry blossoms to send to Miss Martin, and a corsage bouquet of fragrant Parmese violets as big as a breastplate for Beatrice; and all for an infinitesimal sum. The steps of the Spanish Stairs leading up to the Trinità de' Monti were gay with models in picturesque Roman costumes, and for a lira I hired a boy as beautiful as one of Raphael's cherubs to deliver my flowers.

Up the long Scala di Spagna I sped with winged feet. If all Rome was on the Pincio at this hour, what might not be awaiting me at the end of my climb? Through the Piazza della Trinità I hurried, hardly stopping to glance at the twin towers of Santa Trinità or its obelisk,

and up the steep incline past the Villa Medici. There, in the avenue of evergreen oaks, despite my haste, I was compelled to stop a moment and look off over the city lying below me,—across the low dome of the Pantheon, beyond the yellow Tiber to the mighty tower of Castel Angelo close to the river, and still further on to where the wonderful dome of St. Peter's rose in the west against a golden sky. Only the hope of seeing Beatrice could have drawn me from a view whose like I had never dreamed existed.

Once through the gates of the Pincio, I followed the stream of motors and carriages, eagerly scanning each one as it passed for a glimpse of Beatrice. On the terrace overhanging the Piazza del Popolo I found myself in a maze of carriages and motors drawn up around the military band, ostensibly listening to the music but really visiting from motor to motor. Young Italian exquisites, hat in hand, were standing beside motors talking to beautiful women, or had been invited to a vacant seat in the car and were chatting gaily, openly oblivious to the music. They were not losing as much as they would have lost had it been an open-air concert on the Brühl'sche Terrasse in Dresden, for an Italian band is not a German orchestra, but I wondered a little that no one seemed to be paying any attention to the music, that the whole vast throng were, openly and unabashed, occupied in receiving and paying visits or, if like me they were not fortunate enough to have friends among the motors and carriages, watching with envious eyes those who had.

I am sure from my seat on the terrace, only allowing myself momentary glimpses of the wonderful view grow-

ing every moment more beautiful as rosy sunset clouds gathered in the west behind the great dome, rising dark and majestic in front of them, that I missed no carriage or car that afternoon on the Pincio. Every vehicle of every kind sooner or later stopped on the terrace to exchange visits, or passed slowly along to listen to the music, but in none could I discover Miss Martin or Beatrice. I lingered till the sun sank behind St. Peter's and the warm and golden air had turned gray and chill, while only a thin stream of motors was left winding slowly toward the gates. Then I retraced my steps, my feet dull and laggard instead of winged as when I had climbed the steep Scala de Spagna and the long avenue of evergreen oaks by the Villa Medici.

In my room at the hotel I would have given much to have been able to go to bed, instead of being compelled to dress for dinner. I was tired from my journey, and I was also dispirited. Had Beatrice left Rome? I had received but one little note from her, soon after her arrival in Rome, and I knew nothing of her plans. Very likely she had gone on to Naples and Sorrento and Capri, or possibly still farther, to Sicily and Greece and Cairo, for that was the road tourists were likely to take in February.

But there was no getting rid of my dinner; an invitation from the ambassador was a royal command to me. I made a hurried toilet and presented myself at the embassy with a bare two minutes to spare. But though I came near being late, some one else was later.

"You are assigned to a young American woman for dinner," said the ambassador to me. "I hope she is not going to prove as unpunctual as I have heard some

young American women are. She has not arrived yet."

"I hope not," I answered perfunctorily, without the slightest prophetic quickening of my pulses.

"Of course you like Americans? All you young fellows do."

"I like some Americans," I began, but the ambassador interrupted me.

"Ah, here they come! Miss Martin, I began to be afraid the meet had been too much for you. Miss Ludlow, allow me to present your dinner-partner."

But the ambassador did not finish; he saw it was not necessary. Beatrice had turned, and at sight of me all the color left her face for a moment, then rushed back in a rosy flood. She slowly extended her hand.

"This is a great pleasure, Miss Ludlow," I said formally, as I bent low over her hand.

She responded in her stateliest fashion:

"And a great surprise, Mr. Hatfield. What has brought you to Rome?"

## CHAPTER XV

### ON THE SHORES OF LAGO DI NEMI

**A**S soon as I had answered Beatrice's question, her stateliness vanished; she was a genial friend, plainly pleased at meeting an old comrade.

I think at first she had thought I had followed her to Rome, and was not entirely pleased with me for so doing. When she learned that I was on duty at the embassy she turned delightedly to Miss Martin.

"Mr. Hatfield is to take Mr. Ballington's place, Miss Martin," she said. "It's odd, isn't it, that he did not mention the name of his substitute?"

Whereupon Miss Martin thawed also, for it was evident that she, too, thought I was following Beatrice and was much displeased.

There had been one thing in Beatrice's speech to Miss Martin that had not been entirely to my liking. Evidently Ballington had been on fairly intimate terms with Beatrice, and he was a good looking young fellow with something more substantial than his good looks to recommend him, since he was not a younger son. However, I was not going to borrow trouble; Ballington was to take Miss Martin down to dinner, while I was to have Beatrice. Moreover, in the morning Ballington would leave for London and I would have a clear field for two or three months. Let him look to his laurels.

That dinner at the embassy was the beginning of three months in paradise. I cannot imagine a lovelier spot in the world than Rome in February, March, and April. But alas for my resolve to save every cent of my salary for Beatrice! As I look back on those three months I wonder that I managed to keep out of debt, for that was all I did manage to do.

Society in Rome through the early spring months is as much of a whirl as in any of the gayest capitals, and the British ambassador is very lenient with young attachés; he allows them sufficient leisure for a moderate indulgence in the whirl.

But aside from the claims of society, which I enjoyed because I constantly met Beatrice at tea, dinner, and dance, my chief allowed me time for many little sight-seeing excursions with Miss Martin and Beatrice. There were motor-trips to Tivoli, to Hadrian's Villa, to Frascati; there were horseback rides to many out-of-the-way spots in the Alban and Sabine Hills; there were drives in the Campagna and lovely walks through the Borghese gardens, or through the gardens of the Palazzo Doria and the Passegiata Margherita; and once a week I was free to follow the hounds with Beatrice, I on my own horse, Selim, sent out to me from home, she on a very good hunter given her by Miss Martin.

There were few days of the week when I did not see Beatrice, but I never saw her alone. She had been a demure student in Leipzig, living quietly at an ordinary pension. In Rome Miss Martin had taken a villa on the Janiculum. She had motors and horses and a retinue of servants; she entertained and was entertained by the old Roman nobility, descendants of the historic



Colonnas and Orsinis, the Dorias, Torlonas, and Piccolommines; and she was a welcome guest, with her beautiful protégée, at every embassy in the city. Small wonder that I chafed at the little headway I was making in my friendship with Beatrice, when I had to share her favors with a swarm of young Italian nobles, attachés from the various embassies, or eligible young foreigners sojourning in Rome for the winter.

Yet a day came when I had her to myself. On that one day in all those three months I believed I had made progress. We were both members of a week-end party at the Villa Nuova in the Alban hills. Some of the younger members of the party had ridden out from Rome on their horses, and Beatrice and I had been of the number. The others had motored, my ambassador inviting Miss Martin—to whom he had taken a great fancy—to ride in his car.

The villa belonged to a member of the Italian cabinet and I think there may have been some political significance in the invitations, for besides my chief the French ambassador and the Russian ambassador were members of the party. This did not at first occur to me, but an excursion to Lake Nemi was arranged for Saturday, an all day jaunt with luncheon *al fresco* on the shores of the beautiful lake, and neither the ambassadors nor our host took part in it. Our absence gave them a long day to themselves at the villa for uninterrupted talk.

It gave me, also, my chance with Beatrice. We had been given our choice of motors or horses for the excursion, and naturally the younger members of the party preferred horses. The excursion included a visit to the Villa Barberini on the shores of Lake Albano, and the

Emissarium, that wonderful outlet of the lake. The villa, like most Italian villas, was enchanting; we were not to have luncheon until two and we had made an early start; there was plenty of time to linger in its lovely, shaded grounds and enjoy its wonderful views of the Campagna. Here, I thought, is my opportunity to have Beatrice to myself. But I could not manage it; the young Prince di Savelli was close at her heels every moment, and Harry Burton of New York was never far away. From the villa we went back to the Castel Gandolfo where the custodian of the Emissarium was waiting for us, left our horses and motors in the Galleria di Sopra—the beautiful avenue of evergreen oaks between Castel Gandolfo and Albano—and climbed down the steep descent to the lake. And now fortune favored me, for the descent was so steep every man must offer his services to some woman and I manœvered successfully for Beatrice. Not that I was of any use; she scorned all assistance and was quite as sure-footed as I. The path was narrow and steep, the prince was helping the daughter of our host, Harry Burton the daughter of the French ambassador, and both women were clinging to the arms of their escorts after a fashion that I wished Beatrice would adopt. The moments were not to be wasted; I might never again have her to myself.

“Beatrice,” I said abruptly, “do you realize that I have been in Rome nearly three months and this is the first time I have been alone with you, even for a moment?”

“Is it?” she answered imperturbably. “Then it’s a good chance to ask you what I have been longing to ask, but found no opportunity to do so. Why did you give

up your university course and go into diplomacy now? You did not intend to when I saw you in Leipzig."

"Shall I answer truly?"

"Of course," carelessly.

"Because, Beatrice, I was anxious to get to work; I was in a hurry to begin laying the foundations of that modest competency which will permit me to ask the woman I love to marry me."

Beatrice tried to look at me, but it was only a fleeting glance. I think she did not dare meet my eyes, for her own dropped and her color rose steadily, though she asked me another question—its import I did not at first discover—with an air of studied indifference:

"Have you ever met Miss Hayes-Belden, Mr. Hatfield?"

"Yes. Why do you ask?"

"Do you not think she is beautiful?"

"Yes, very."

"And charming?"

"Very."

"Then—then—why do you wait for that competency? She has money."

"Beatrice!" I exclaimed, shocked and just a little disgusted.

"Oh, don't misunderstand me, please," she exclaimed hurriedly, looking up at me with distress in her eyes. "Don't you remember what I said to you, Hugh, in the Rosenthal? I'm not being horrid to you. I really think, since you are a younger son, that you *ought* to marry a lovely English girl with money, and I don't believe you can find any one lovelier than Miss Hayes-Belden. You understand how I said it?"

"I understand," I answered, boldly taking her hand, for the path was winding and no one was in sight; and, if there had been, there was every excuse for holding her hand since the path was at its steepest. "You may say what you please, so long as you call me 'Hugh,' and I 'll forgive it. But I would n't say anything like that again, for there 's only one woman in the world I want to marry, and she *has n't* any money and her name is *n't* Gladys Hayes-Belden."

"All right, I won't, Hugh," she answered, dimpling and rosy, and looking at me shyly. I don't know what might have happened, so enchanting did she look, but at a sudden turn in the road we came upon the whole party gathered at the Emissarium waiting for us.

One could not look at that roaring shaft of water, rushing through its channel hewed from solid rock thousands of years ago, without a feeling of awe and tremendous respect for those prehistoric people, descendants of the "Pious Æneas" who founded Alba Longa on that low hill across the lake, and who had left behind them this mighty monument to their skill and energy. We were nearly an hour exploring the imposing Emissarium and the Nymphœum at its entrance, and by the time we had climbed again to our horses and motors on the Galleria di Sopra some of the party began to think of the luncheon awaiting us on the banks of Nemi and spurred their horses or speeded their motors. Once more I managed so that Beatrice and I were left in the rear, for I had not yet said all I wanted to say.

In the beautiful avenue of evergreen oaks, catching wonderful glimpses between the trees of the picturesque Castel Gandolfo, the wide Campagna crossed by its long

lines of aqueducts borne on lofty arches, the ancient Appian Way and its mighty substructure, the wonderful viaduct of Pius IX, over which our road lay, the distant Sabine hills, and the beautiful Alban hills above and below us, Beatrice gave me no chance to do anything but exclaim, wonder and admire. But after leaving the little village of Ariccia with its beautiful women, we came to a parting of the ways. Three roads faced us; we were not supposed to know which one our party had chosen, though it was easy to conjecture they would take the direct one to Lake Nemi, and therefore I chose the middle one to the Palazzo Cesarini. At the palazzo we gained admission to the park without difficulty, and leaving our horses outside, we wandered through shaded avenues of oak and ilex, through fragrant alleys of oleander in soft and brilliant bloom, past miniature marble temples in ruins, garlanded with purple wistaria, past patches of meadow carpeted with many colored anemones, through rose gardens odorous with the sweetest of all odors and glowing with every shade from darkest crimson to palest pink and from deep red gold to softest cream and white.

On the shores of the lovely lake, its clear depths sparkling like some mountain stream, we found a spreading ilex shading a marble bench whose sculptured fruits and flowers and leaves and winged heads might well have been wrought by the chisel of Scopas. The air was soft, warm, and fragrant with a thousand delicious odors, and the midday sun was like the sun of June. The invitation of the cool shade of the ilex was not to be resisted and for half an hour, with every sense lapped by the song of the nightingale from twilight cypress groves,

the mingled odors of a thousand bewildering fragrances, the sparkling waters, the distant purple hills, the lovely blossoms all around us, I had Beatrice to myself.

I think she would have liked to spend the half hour in dwelling on the glories of Italy in spring, but I was not going to waste my only chance in months in singing the splendors of Italy.

"Yes, it's all very beautiful, and I've been very happy here, but my time must be nearly up; any day Ballington may return and it is all over for me," I complained.

"Oh, I hope not," she said softly. "Why can't you stay on, even if Mr. Ballington does return?"

"Because I must find a new post; I cannot afford to spend my time loafing."

"Your 'cannot afford' amuses me. I've no doubt to most of our American young men your allowance would seem princely."

"It would do very well if I had only myself to consider."

"Is there anyone else?" surprised or pretending to be.

"Yes."

"Who, please?"

"You."

"I cannot see what I have to do with it," a little stiffly.

"You have everything to do with it, and you know it," I plunged in hotly. "And much as I have enjoyed Rome, I am almost glad my stay here is ended; I want to begin all over in some place where it will be easier to carry out my plans."

"Would you mind telling me your plans?"

She had the air of a good friend trying to show a kindly interest in matters in which she had no concern. I hesitated a moment.

"Very well," I said slowly; "you may not be interested, but I believe I would rather you did know them. I came to Rome determined to save every penny of my salary and I have failed miserably. In these three months I should have accumulated quite a little nest-egg; as it is, if I get out of Rome with all my debts paid I will be in luck."

"Oh, Hugh!" she interrupted quickly. "I'm afraid your money has gone into flowers, candies, dinners, and theater parties for Miss Martin and me."

"Mighty little of it; and that little exceedingly well spent. No, it's gone into horses and motors, keeping a groom and a chauffeur, and some of it has gone into more clothes than were necessary. But I'm going to reform as soon as I get to a new place."

"It will be just as hard in a new place, won't it?"

"Not if you're not there. I sha'n't go into society. I sha'n't want to, if there will be no chance of meeting you."

"So; this is a warning to keep my distance, is it?"

She smiled as she said it, and I smiled back straight into her eyes, as I answered:

"Sounds like it."

So we understood one another and this much was clear gain. But I had not finished explaining my plans, and I wanted her to know all.

"Of course," I went on, "the little salary I've been receiving here would n't go very far toward that competency to which I'm looking forward; but part of my

plan was to make myself so indispensable at the embassy that when there was something better in the gift of the Home Department they would think of me. In the meantime, by using every opportunity to study diplomacy in its broader outlines, I shall make myself ready, when I am an older man and the opportunity comes, to be a chief somewhere myself. I might have to begin with the less important countries, but if I only show myself of value in whatever place I'm put, who knows what prizes might not eventually come to me?"

"I do not believe this part of your plan has been a failure, Hugh. I am absolutely sure you have made good in the embassy here."

"Why do you think so?"

"Oh, from a thousand little things; a word your ambassador lets drop now and then; the way he looks at you sometimes; the flattering attention he shows you when you speak. I believe he adores you."

I blushed with pleasure at her words. All that she cited I thought I had seen myself; that she had noticed it too was confirmation strong as Holy Writ. I really believed I had made good with my ambassador. And how delicious it was to be talking it over with her in this confidential way! It seemed to me a foretaste of future bliss.

"I think he does like me," I answered, I hope modestly. "He's a grand old man; I hate to leave him. I'm afraid I'll never have another chief like him."

"Perhaps he won't let you go," she suggested hopefully.

"Yes, he'll have to; the place belongs to Ballington. No doubt he likes Ballington as well, or better."



"I don't believe it," with a convincing shake of her pretty head.

"But, Beatrice," I said, and now I boldly took her hand, I had need of all my courage, "when I have secured a place with a living salary—big enough for two people, and perhaps more—and have my first thousand pounds safely invested and my allowance put by for emergencies, I'm going to ask you to marry me. But remember"—I stopped her as she started to speak—"I have n't asked you and you have n't refused me."

"I'll remember," she answered demurely after a moment's deliberation. "I have n't refused you—yet."

"Now," I said, giving her hand a good hard squeeze in acknowledgment of her saucy "yet," but not letting it go, "we'll talk of other things. Confound that Ballington! I wish he was n't so good looking."

She answered me with a delighted laugh.

"And that reminds me—do you ever hear from Herr Lubella or Mr. Witkowski?"

"Occasionally. I've had a letter and two or three postcards from each of them."

"Do either of them mention coming to Rome?"

"Not that I know of. Oh," as if it were an afterthought, "Mr. Witkowski did speak of the possibility of his being in Venice in May, when we are there."

"Venice!" I groaned. "It's deadlier than Rome, with its gondolas and moonlight on the water."

She laughed again joyously at my lugubrious tone.

"And how about Baron von Dreidorf?" I persisted in my inquisition. "Will he be in Venice, too?"

"Baron von Dreidorf? I had a note from him this

morning, from Rome, asking permission to call as soon as we get back."

"Beatrice! I call that downright perfidy! What has brought him to Rome?"

She did not laugh as she had laughed before. Evidently this was a more serious matter. To me, at least, it was serious, for of all the men I had ever encountered I had never met one with the godlike beauty and charming manners of "Siegfried"; and I believed mind and heart were worthy of his face and address. How could any woman withstand such a suitor!

Beatrice glanced at the jewelled watch on her wrist and sprang to her feet.

"Hugh!" she exclaimed. "Do you realize it is after two o'clock and we will be awfully late for luncheon?"

## CHAPTER XVI

### ON THE TERRACE AT VILLA NUOVA

**W**E had been late to luncheon, of course, and had excused ourselves on the ground that we had lost our way, taken the road to the Palazzo Cesarini instead of the one to the lake, and found the park so entrancing that we had overstayed our time. I think the explanations embarrassed Beatrice and made the Prince di Savelli suspicious. I know both the prince and Burton of New York took care that during the rest of the day I should not be alone with Beatrice.

I did n't care; I had had my talk. Beatrice understood my position; now it was up to me to make good. Moreover, the luncheon was delicious. It was spread on a flat rock in a dense shade fanned by cooling breezes from the blue lake and its wooded shores, and every wonderful luncheon dish that the Italians know how to concoct better than any other people in the world was deftly served by two men in our host's livery. There was much talk and laughter, and no one seemed to remember that any impropriety had been committed or that Beatrice and I had laid ourselves open to criticism.

Did I say I did n't care? That was true as far as Burton and the Prince di Savelli were concerned. I did not believe Burton was serious, and the prince, I felt sure, could not afford to marry a penniless American.

But when I remembered that the Baron von Dreidof was already in Rome, where he would remain through the lovely spring days when I was far away, I did care, for the baron was another matter.

That evening my ambassador and I were the first two dressed for dinner, and we sat on the terrace with the long shadows from yew-trees and ilex groves resting upon it, watching the sunset. The stone railing of the terrace was garlanded with wistaria; below us in the garden fountains were leaping into the air, such fountains as one sees nowhere but in Rome and its environs; birds were singing their last ecstatic songs of the evening; roses were everywhere, a riot of bloom, and filling the air with fragrance as the evening dew began to drench them. Still farther below lay the great, mysterious Campagna, half veiled in violet mist, crossed by its long lines of arches stretching away toward Rome. And farther to the west, in the very heart of the sunset, its great dome rising dark and majestic against gold- and rose-colored clouds, sat the Imperial City, still almost as much the mistress of the world as in the days of her might.

The ambassador and I were silent for a few minutes, drinking in the ravishing sights and sounds and odors. But I knew it was not to watch a sunset from the Alban hills that he had sent word to me to dress early and meet him on the terrace, and through all my keen appreciation of the view there ran a little subconscious thread of curiosity tinged with anxiety. Had something happened? And what?

"Hatfield," he turned to me at last and took the cigar from his mouth, he was an inveterate smoker,

"I have been hearing some things today that I find it hard to credit. I asked you to come down early in order to get your opinion about them."

It was tremendously flattering to me that he should be seeking my opinion about matters that evidently, if I could judge from his serious countenance, he considered of great moment.

"Yes, sir?" I replied, for he seemed to be waiting for me to say something.

"Our friends," indicating by a wave of his cigar toward the house the Italian minister and the Russian and French ambassadors, "believe that Germany means war, that she is even now hunting a pretext. Of course, if it were only the Russian and French ambassadors' idea, I should n't give it a second thought; the Russians and the French are always imagining that the Germans are trying to pick a quarrel with them. But when a member of the Italian cabinet tells me practically the same thing, it gives me food for thought. A minister of one of the states in the Triple Alliance must *know*. I don't want you to think he has been divulging state secrets; he has not. But what the Russian and French ambassadors affirm, he does not deny. We four have been more or less intimate during my residence in Rome. We have formed a little club to play bridge, and we spend many evenings together at the game. It was for the sake of our bridge, ostensibly, that we three were invited here, but I'm not sure that our host did not have some other end in view. Of course you understand that this conversation is entirely confidential?" he broke off suddenly in anxious query.

"Certainly, sir. Entirely."

"Now what I want to ask you, Hatfield, is this: You have recently come from Germany. Did you see anything there that looked like preparations for war? Take your time and think," he added, as he saw me hesitate a moment.

I did take my time and thought hard. Then I answered:

"I saw some things, sir, that might be so construed. There is certainly an immense amount of military activity, especially noticeable in practice marching. Germany is fairly alive with long lines of men marching and counter-marching in full field equipment. I also understand that her ammunition factories are working day and night. But perhaps the two symptoms that now look to me, as I recall them, the most suspicious, are first, that the Germans are building an immense number of new railroads, especially toward the western frontier, on which they are rushing work night and day; and secondly, that they are redoubling precautions against all foreigners. I came near being arrested as a spy myself."

"You?"

I laughed, and then told him of the annoyance I had suffered from the Herr Geheimrath von Blarcom and what Baron von Dreidorf had told me of the accusations against me.

"All of which looks very much as if my friends might be right," said my chief, musing. "But, Hatfield," he spoke with flattering unction, "I want to say to you that, for a young man, I think you have shown rather unusual powers of observation and judgment."

Up to this time I had not mentioned Marcel. It was

to his powers of observation and judgment, however, that the credit belonged, and not to mine. It was he who had called my attention to the extraordinary activity in railroad building and the unusual amount of field practice. It was he, also, who had told me about the ammunition factories and their feverish energy. Now I determined to tell my chief Marcel's story, and at first I think it was distasteful to him that I should have been mixed up with a spy. But as I made him see the fine fellow Marcel really was, quoting the latter's words about a spy being a patriot, and then described our tramp together to the frontier where Marcel went off alone to a possible death, I saw my chief draw his hand hastily across his eyes, blow his nose vigorously, and begin puffing fiercely at his cigar.

We were both silent a moment after I had finished my recital. I was living over again those last moments with Marcel. I do not know what the Ambassador was thinking, but presently he cleared his throat.

"Your friend is right, Hugh. A spy may be the noblest of patriots. He gives his life for his country, and can expect not glory, but dishonor as his reward."

His "Hugh" touched me greatly; he had never called me anything but "Hatfield" before, when he was most friendly, or "Mr. Hatfield" when he was formal. Now, as if to dismiss all sad thoughts, he said briskly:

"And now for your own affairs, Hugh. I have a letter from the Home office in my pocket; you may read it presently. They want you to go at once to Berlin. There is rather an important post to be filled there and your salary will be doubled. Mr. Ballington returned today. I think you ought to start for Berlin on the

early train Monday, and as there are one or two little things I would like to have you do for me before you go, perhaps you had better get back to the city in the morning."

I was dazed. He had taken my breath away, as perhaps he had intended. Perhaps he wished to give me no time to think. I stammered over my reply to him, but he cut me short by handing me the letter. It was evident from the letter that this going to Berlin was my chief's doing, and also that he had spoken of me to the Home Office in the highest terms. When I tried to express my appreciation, he again cut me short.

"Of course I think you are promising, Hatfield, and I would like to keep you with me. But there is no place for you here, and next to Rome I would like to have you in Berlin just now. I don't believe we can ever make the present government believe there is the slightest danger of war with Germany, but I want you to keep me informed and I'll do what I can with those stubborn fellows in Downing Street."

"How shall I keep you informed? By using our code?"

"No; we'll have to devise some other way. Those fellows in Berlin are sharp enough to untangle any cipher. If an acquaintance of yours that you know you can trust happens to be coming to Rome, you can give him a letter for me. Seal it, of course. You can explain the necessity for sealing it."

"All right, sir, I'll do my best," I answered.

I was beginning to feel a strong thrill of excitement, some of its pleasurable, some otherwise. Berlin! War! State secrets! Promotion! Doubled salary!



All that elated me. But on the other hand, Rome in the morning! Off for Berlin the next day! I had seen my last of Beatrice to all intents and purposes. The prince and Burton would have all Sunday with her, and I would not be there to keep guard. And on Monday she would be back in Rome with Ballington and Baron von Dreidorf. No, it was not all pleasurable excitement.

The ambassador broke into my musings.

"Ah, here come the rest. I've decided, Hugh, to take you to Rome in my motor tomorrow morning. I have still much to say to you. Your man, I suppose, can get your horse and take it on to Berlin?"

I did not intend to have either my horse or man in Berlin, but I did not tell the ambassador so. Now, at last, I was going to begin to save money, and that Berlin salary would be worth saving.

I managed to ask Beatrice, as we were going into dinner, to come out on the terrace after the others had gone upstairs, for I had something to say to her. At first she was inclined to refuse; she had been "improper" enough for one day, she said. But when I told her I was leaving for Rome in the morning and for Berlin on Monday, she changed color and said simply: "I will come."

The moon was flooding the terrace, making it almost as bright as day, except where stately yews and gloomy cypresses plunged it into dense shadow, when Beatrice, all in white and hardly distinguishable from one of the many marble figures scattered among the shrubbery, came out to me where I sat on the stone balustrade, smoking and waiting for her. I led her to a marble seat under a drooping cypress that I had selected as being completely screened from observation from the house. It was close

to the balustrade, and we could look off over the Campagna, the rising mists in the white moonlight rolling in toward us like billows of a vast sea and no one could gaze on that wide ocean of rolling, billowing mist without a feeling of awe.

But we did not look at it long. I had set the limit of her stay at ten minutes, for I did not want Beatrice to be annoyed by criticism.

She was the first to break the silence.

"You are going to Berlin, Hugh? And so suddenly?"

"Yes, Beatrice.

"Are we not to be allowed to come to Berlin?" she asked, with an attempt at lightness.

"Most ardently I hope you will, but when you are not there, society shall not know me. I am going to work in earnest, and I'm hoping it will not be very long before I can ask you a certain question, Beatrice. I've been promoted."

"I'm so glad, Hugh," she said quickly, and then was covered with confusion. "I mean I'm so glad you are winning recognition and honors. But please, Hugh, forget about that question. I'm not at all sure I'll be ready to answer it when you ask it."

"Never mind, I'll risk it. And in the meantime I want you to write me regularly. Once a week, if you please."

"Once a week!" she cried, aghast.

"Yes," I answered sternly, "once a week. And I want you to write me what you are doing, who you are meeting and how you are liking them. You see I am arranging for a system of espionage over you, to be conducted by yourself."

"I see," she replied laconically, "but I'm not sure I'll carry out your system."

"I think you will when you come to think it over. All I want is that you answer my letters, and in the same vein that I write them. I promise they shall not be love-letters."

She thought a moment, and then looked up at me. A stray moonbeam fell full on her face, and I could see her eyes very sweet and grave as she answered steadily:

"Very well, Hugh, I will answer all your letters."

"And now, Beatrice, it's good-by."

I was terribly tempted to take her in my arms and seal my good-by with a kiss. And I almost think she would have let me, so yielding was her mood. But I was being very stern with myself. I had to be to keep within bounds.

"Good-by, Beatrice," I said, and was mortified that my voice, in my efforts to keep it steady, should be so hoarse and broken. "Go back to the house alone, please. I will finish my cigar out here."

"Good-by," she whispered.

But she did not go back to the house at once. Instead she lingered, saying softly once more, "Good-by, Hugh, —no, not good-by, but 'a rivedérei,'" clinging to my hand with both of hers.

And surely there could be no wrong in lifting those two fragrant little hands and holding them for a long moment to my lips.

## CHAPTER XVII

### BARON VON DREIDORF EXPRESSES AN OPINION

I HAD been in Berlin two months to a day when the terrible tragedy of Serajevo shook Europe to its foundations. And yet, profoundly moved as was every kingdom, every principality, every duchy, and every republic, there was no ruler on the continent—with the possible exception of the emperor of Germany and the emperor of Austria-Hungary—who dreamed of the awful cataclysm so soon to follow.

Those two months had been for me uneventful, but full of tremendous interest. In the first place my correspondence with my old chief, LeGrand, in Rome had been absorbing. The difficulty in arranging it had been, of course, that the German system of espionage is so perfect—as, for that matter, are all their systems—that to write to Rome in any possible code was simply to allow the German authorities to read all that I wrote.

During that morning's ride with my chief from the Villa Nuova to Rome we had talked this over, and I had suggested then that we adopt Stieber's method—no code, but a letter along general lines to mean something entirely different from its surface appearance. We agreed that in these letters "Willy" should refer either to the Kaiser or the Germans, "George" to the English, "Fanny" to the French, "Ruth" to the Russians, and

"Joe" to the Austrians. I made a little memorandum of this "code" and gave it to the ambassador to be used in interpreting my letters but I must keep it in my head, for I could have no betraying papers to get lost or stolen.

All this was very well, and for a time we congratulated ourselves on our ingenuity—or rather my chief congratulated me, since he gave me the credit—but we soon discovered a weak spot in our plan. The mere fact of my corresponding with the British ambassador at Rome would arouse comment and suspicion in Germany. I suggested this to LeGrand, but he was not willing to give up the idea of the correspondence, as he hoped much from it. I suggested at last that my letters should be written to Ballington and handed over by him, unopened, to LeGrand. He should have a sample of my writing, and the fact that the letters came from Berlin would assure him of their nature, so that it would not be necessary to open them. This was the plan we finally adopted.

I had found this correspondence intensely engrossing, because, in the first place, I feared trespassing on LeGrand's time and patience by writing him of things he would regard as trivial and unimportant, and, in the second place, I feared that I might omit something which he would regard as of supreme importance and concerning which he would feel he ought to have been informed.

My first letter seemed to me entirely trivial, but, if I could judge from LeGrand's answer, it had satisfied him. It read:

Dear Ballington:

I promised to write you how I liked Berlin. I believe I am going to like it immensely. It's a very beautiful city—in May,

at least—and as gay as another Paris. Indeed, to me it looks gayer, with its Uhlans and Royal Guards and splendid infantry always in evidence, marching and counter-marching, and its magnificent-looking officers parading the streets with clanking swords, or dashing about on spirited horses. Almost I would like to be a German officer.

I sent the letter of introduction you gave me to your friend Willy, and he was so polite as to call on me immediately. I liked him very well, though I think I discovered that he is the quarrelsome fellow you reported him to be. It seems he knows our friend George and his wife, Fanny, very well, but he did not hesitate to tell me that he thinks George is dull and stupid, and Fanny ultra-frivolous. When I tried to give him my opinion of them, that they were a charming couple and neither stupid nor frivolous, he grew quite excited. But it's Fanny's sister Ruth he has it in for; he won't hear a good word about her. He certainly does go around with a chip on his shoulder more than anyone I ever met.

But when he is not quarrelsome, he's quite delightful. He has showered me with invitations for next week. If I should accept them all, I should be as gay as we were in Rome, and you know I have decided not to be. You told me he was a large manufacturer, but I was surprised to learn the extent of his industries. They are enormous—factories in every direction and all running night and day to fill orders. I hinted once that I would like very much to visit his factories, but he told me "kindly but firmly" that he was sorry, but he never allowed visitors; he had found that it interfered with work. I was quite chagrined to think that I had so much as hinted at an invitation. But I hear on all sides of the amount of work he's turning out, and I know he must be coining money.

Remember me to my old chief and to my friends the Martins, and write me all the Rome gossip, for I'm interested.

Yours,

HUGH HATFIELD.

There was not much information in that letter, but my chief, writing under the name of Ballington, pro-

fessed himself as much pleased and begged me to write him often. He found my letters "delightful," he said.

Occasionally I had something of more importance to report, as when I discovered, almost by accident, a little of the ramifications of the German spy system in London. It had been enormously increased within the last few months, I discovered, and I had secured the names of several men—"honest German tradespeople" for the most part, though one was a waiter at the Cecil, one at the Ritz-Carlton, and one at the Parliament Café in Westminster—whom I had every reason to believe were Stieber's agents. I also had obtained the names of several women, society women, and I very much wanted to send this list to LeGrand and have him get it through to Hartley. I knew Hartley would pay absolutely no attention to it should I send it to him direct—he would pooh-hoo it as an old wife's tale, for he always was especially incredulous of tales of German spies and laughed to scorn all fears of a German war—but LeGrand might be able to persuade him that at least there would be no harm in investigating my report.

But no letter that I could possibly frame could include such a list. It seemed most opportune, therefore, that my old friend Fitzmaurice should appear in Berlin at this juncture on his way to Rome. At this season travel to Rome had almost ceased. That Fitzmaurice, whom I could trust absolutely, should be going there just when I needed a bearer of despatches, seemed little short of miraculous.

For the first time I could write LeGrand fully and freely and I told him all my fears and suspicions. I believed the Italian minister was right; war was brewing,

and on a tremendous scale. Moreover, I believed Belgium's neutrality was to be violated. Certainly, if one could judge from the number of new lines of railroads all converging toward Aachen, and the troops being concentrated on the western border, war on France, and possibly on England, was imminent, and by way of Belgium. If Belgium's neutrality should be violated, England could not well avoid taking up arms, and I hoped LeGrand would make such representations to Hartley in the Home Office as would force him to begin some sort of preparation. War would certainly find England totally unprepared, and that, according to Bernhardi, was the time for Germany to strike.

My letter was a long one, but it was written on thin paper and inclosed in a sealed envelope. The envelope was addressed to LeGrand and bore the legend, "Introducing Sir James Fitzmaurice." I hoped that if anyone inadvertently saw it, they would not suspect its contents. Of course I had to explain to Fitzmaurice why it was sealed, and he declared he would personally see it delivered into LeGrand's hands, or "die in the attempt." It was not often that I had such an opportunity as this, and I made the most of it.

After the terrible Serajevo tragedy I wrote "Ballington" a brief note in which I managed to inform him that his friend Willy was tremendously excited over the news,—as, for that matter, we all were,—but that Willy, owing to his quarrelsome temper, was especially aroused and went around breathing out dire threats of vengeance.

During the last two months my correspondence with my old chief in Rome had been absorbing enough, but



my correspondence with Beatrice had been more so. As I had promised, there had been no hint of love in my letters to her, but there had been everything else, both in her letters and in mine.

Acquaintance and friendship had made rapid strides in those two months of interchange of letters. I had not been able to pin down Beatrice to my program of a letter a week, nor did she quite keep to her promise of answering all of mine, for when her replies were delayed, as they usually were, I was apt to grow impatient and send another letter, so that hers were usually in answer to two of mine. Yet altogether I had had half-a-dozen letters from her in the interval, and they were letters so full of wit, philosophy, gay gossip, and spicy comment that they were worth a hundred letters from any ordinary woman.

Now, close on the heels of the Serajevo incident, which had filled me, as it filled all Europe, with the gravest concern, came a note from Beatrice, written from the American embassy in Berlin! I had had no hint that she and Miss Martin had intended to visit Berlin. I knew that they had been slowly coming north for some weeks; that they had stopped, in turn, at Florence, Venice, Milan, the Italian lakes, and Switzerland, but my last letter from Interlaken had made no mention of Berlin. My first hint that they thought of coming was Beatrice's note that they were already in the city.

I dropped her note, and with the blood pounding in every vein rushed to the telephone and got her on the wire.

"When did you arrive? How long are you going to

stay? Why did n't you let me know you were coming?" I fired at her in rapid succession.

All my questions were answered without a trace of my own excitement. Toward the last she said: "I wanted to surprise you; are n't you glad?"

"I don't know; I'm so disappointed. I would have liked to meet you at the station with flowers and a brass band. That's the way they do it in America, is n't it?"

"Oh, of course; but hardly in Germany."

"When may I call? This afternoon?"

"Yes; we will be very glad to see you."

I rang off with the feeling that I had had a small douche of cold water. Of course I knew I must ask for Miss Martin and for her hostess, but she need n't have said "we." Why could n't she have said, "I will be glad to see you."

Altogether, though there was no question that every nerve was tingling with delighted anticipation, the delight was somewhat tempered by a sense of irritation. Why had Beatrice not told me she was coming, and why had she sounded so aloof over the telephone? I might have flattered myself that I had been the magnet to draw her to Berlin, but in my inmost soul I felt sure there was some other reason for this unexpected visit.

An ugly suspicion that I could not down hinted that Baron von Driedorf was the magnet, and not I, for von Dreidorf had been in Berlin for the last month, evidently assigned to some business of importance connected with the government or the army, I could not be sure which. He had hunted me up on his arrival, and I had seen much of him in a quiet way. He attracted me strongly

and that the attraction seemed mutual flattered me more than I cared to confess.

I was thinking of the baron as I walked down the avenue to the American embassy. It was as perfect a June afternoon as one ever sees, and Unter den Linden was at its gayest—beautiful women and handsome men strolling along the sidewalks, brilliant equipages of every description flashing by on the roadway, flowers blooming, fountains playing, sun shining, the whole world gay, joyous, and peaceful. Insensibly I felt my undercurrent of irritation evaporate under a strong glow of elation. It was a good world to be alive in, with Beatrice waiting for me at the end of my short walk. Then, I was ushered into the embassy drawing-room, saw Beatrice at the farther end, near a tea-table, surrounded by a group of men and women, and, towering inches above every man in the room, the golden head of "Siegfried"!

I said to myself that I had expected it, and I tried to put into my greeting to Beatrice and Miss Martin the joy I no longer felt. She had called up Baron von Dreidorf, also; or had she written him she was coming? I determined to find out. It was a small matter, but my peace of mind for the present seemed to hang upon it.

Naturally the talk came around at intervals to the *attentat* at Serajevo. It seemed impossible to keep away from the horror of it. There were surmises as to what Austria would do,—some of them not far from the mark,—and, in the event of war, which, of course, was possible, between Servia and Austria-Hungary, what course Germany and Italy would take.

I took no part in this discussion. I felt, since Le-Grand had confided to me the Italian minister's views

as to Germany seeking a pretext for war, that I knew fairly well what Germany's course would be, and, better perhaps than any one present, what Italy would do in such an event. But of course my lips were sealed. I could only say that I hoped and believed that, in this day of advanced civilization, there would be a pacific adjustment of the affair. Austria could not afford to put herself on a level with the half barbaric fanatic who had committed the atrocity, or with those other semi-civilized fanatics who, possibly, had been behind him. But in the very act of saying this it struck me with cold horror that here was the very pretext the Italian minister had declared Germany was seeking, and that she would not hesitate to urge Austria to seize it.

Neither had von Dreidorf taken any part in the discussion, except once, when some one asked him, most undiplomatically, what he thought Germany would do in case of war between Austria and Servia. It was a silly young American girl who asked the question, and I was glad it had not been Beatrice. Everyone present felt it was most maladroit, but nevertheless everyone present kept silence and listened keenly for his answer, I among the number.

With a brilliant smile, as cold as ice and flashing like steel, he answered:

"I cannot speak for Germany, Miss Gordon, but I should think it would be a matter to be settled between Austria-Hungary and Servia alone."

"Poor little Servia!" I heard Beatrice murmur, softly, and I felt like repeating her words—*Poor little Servia!*

But Beatrice saw, from the baron's manner to Miss

Gordon, that this was no place to be discussing the *attentat*, and she set herself resolutely to turning the tide of talk to lighter channels. Baron von Dreidorf and I seconded her efforts, and a new voice at the opera and the latest escapade of one of the royal princes soon crowded out all mention of the crime.

I had fully determined to outstay the other callers, but the baron was evidently of the same mind, and there came a moment when, for very decency's sake, I felt that I must make a move to go. Von-Dreidorf rose to his feet with alacrity at my suggestion, and offered to walk along with me, an offer I could not very well decline.

I had had no opportunity for a word alone with Beatrice, but I had a little talk with Miss Martin, who, I was beginning to feel, was my friend, and I gleaned two items from this conversation that were enlightening. One was that Miss Martin had been called unexpectedly to Berlin on important business with the American consulate, just when all their plans had been made for Paris and London. It was quite disappointing, Miss Martin declared, but, she added, there had been some compensation in the thought of meeting me. That, to say the least, was gratifying, and I told her so.

In reply she said in her odd, italicized fashion:

"Oh, no *thanks*, please. I 'm getting just a little tired of *foreigners* and so, I believe, is Beatrice. And a *Britisher* is the next best thing to a *Yankee*."

"Bless you for that, Miss Martin," I said fervently. "Perhaps some day you 'll think me not 'almost,' but altogether as good."

"Perhaps I will," she answered, with a demure

twinkle in her eye, a twinkle that seemed to understand perfectly.

Then she gave me her second bit of enlightenment.

"The Berlin papers are as bad as our Yankee papers about putting in 'personals.' We *thought* we were going to steal in here *quietly*, transact our business, and get away again. And here the morning papers are *full* of the arrival of the 'beautiful Miss Ludlow'; they never mention *me*."

"Was it in the papers? I did n't see it."

"No, but *other* people did; and behold! all this crowd of young men who knew Beatrice when we were here before put in an appearance on our *first* afternoon."

"And you did n't send them word?" I asked boldly.

"Not *one* of them; except, I believe, Beatrice said she was going to send you a note. Did she?"

"She did, and I'm tremendously grateful, for I'm so stupid I don't see half the things I ought to in the papers."

"Not the *gossip*, I'm sure; you're not the kind to waste your time on idle society notes."

I wish Beatrice had half the good opinion of me Miss Martin seems to have, I ejaculated mentally.

In thinking the matter over, as I walked up the Linden with Baron von Dreidorf—it was something of an ordeal, for pretty women shot sly glances at him, and men turned to gaze boldly—I came to the conclusion that Miss Martin had purposely let me know that Beatrice had written to no one but me. She is sharp as a razor, and perhaps she had read my thoughts when my eyes first fell upon the baron.

Sauntering slowly up the boulevard, neither of us in

any haste to leave the balmy air of the June evening, von Dreidorf asked me suddenly, apropos of nothing:

"What did you think of Miss Gordon's question?"

"I thought it a little indiscreet, but I was much interested in your answer."

"I hope it was non-committal?"

"It was, to a degree. Nevertheless it contained a hint that gave me food for thought. Do you really believe, in case of war, that that would be Germany's attitude? I mean that Austria and Servia would be allowed to fight it out alone?"

"As I said to Miss Gordon, Hatfield, I cannot speak for Germany. But I'll say to you, confidentially, that I think that is the line we'll take. However, personally, I hope with all my heart that there will be no war."

"I cannot believe there will be. The Balkan States, hardly yet thoroughly civilized, may fly to arms to avenge a wrong, or to round out their boundaries, but I cannot believe a world-power like Austria will be so medieval."

The baron shook his head gloomily.

"I wish I could agree with you, but world-powers, as I know them, still believe in war. It's not so long since Russia, France, Italy, England, and even America, were at war. Germany has had forty years of peace—longer than any of them."

"That's true; you have. And yet, somehow, we always think of Germany as the most warlike of all the nations."

"I believe she is—only we don't go to war on a slight pretext or on a small scale. If you don't mind my boasting a little, when Germany goes to war—if she ever

does, which God forbid—it will be on a stupendous scale.”

“I am sure of it,” I answered. “Let us hope she never will.”

“Amen!” said von Dreidorf earnestly, and then he laughed.

“Come, Hatfield, we are being very solemn, *nicht wahr?* Here’s the Hotel Royal; come up to my rooms and have a smoke.”



## CHAPTER XVIII

### BRUDERSCHAFT

**A**LL my good resolutions about keeping out of society and saving money were thrown to the winds during the next three weeks. For Miss Martin did not conclude her business as soon as she had expected, and I was plunged into a round of gaieties—or took the dip voluntarily.

I saw much of Beatrice, but had only the unsatisfactory opportunities that dinners and dances afford for conversation. It sometimes seemed to me that Baron von Dreidorf had more opportunities than I had. For one thing, he had his horses with him and could invite Beatrice to ride; I, with my mistaken idea of economy, as I was beginning to consider it, had sent mine home with my man. Moreover, the baron was on more friendly terms with the American embassy than I was, and he was often invited to small, informal dinners or evenings at home when I was not included. I would not have minded this so much, if I had been certain that Beatrice preferred me to him, but I could not be sure of this. I could see no reason why she should, for, aside from his personal attractions, he was a great favorite at court and could secure invitations for her to delightful functions from which a simple attaché was excluded. I sometimes wished she had never come to Berlin. With von Dreidorf out of the way I might have had some

chance, but I began to believe I had none as long as he was around. Not that Beatrice was not always "nice" to me, as Miss Martin would have phrased it. I began to think she was too nice; that if she had cared more, she would not have been so uniformly sweet and kind.

I was still in this uncertain frame of mind as to the state of Beatrice's affections when, just three weeks from the day I had first called on her at the embassy, Austria hurled her insolent ultimatum in Serbia's face. There followed two weeks of earthquake, fire, and whirlwind in the mental atmosphere of Europe. Every day brought forth new and astounding developments. The pourparlers of the Powers flew back and forth over cable and wire between the courts of England, Germany, Austria, Russia, Serbia, and France. We in the Berlin embassy were proud of Sir Edward Grey during these pourparlers. More than any other man he strained every nerve to preserve the peace of Europe. But the faces of Austria and Germany were set like flint, and all the pourparlers came to nothing.

Like bombs, every hour news hurtled over the wires. One hardly recovered from the first appalling shock before the next more frightful one struck. One was dazed by the reverberations.

"Russia regards Austria's note to Serbia as a challenge to herself." "Russia orders partial mobilization on the Austrian frontier."

"Serbia replies to Austria." "Her reply is considered unsatisfactory. Austria withdraws her minister and staff from Belgrade."

"Sir Edward Grey suggests that the Austro-Servian matter be adjusted by Germany, Italy, England, and France. France and Italy accept."

Then came the fulfillment of Baron von Dreidorf's prediction:

"Germany sends word to the chancelleries that this is a matter that concerns neither Russia nor the rest of Europe, but Austria and Serbia alone." Whereupon: "Serbia orders a general mobilization, Austria a partial mobilization, and Russia mobilizes five army corps."

"Russia places covering troops along East Prussian frontier." "Germany mobilizes on frontier of Poland." "Kaiser and Czar exchange telegrams calling attention each to the other's mobilization."

"Russia still makes efforts for peace. Sazonoff asks Austria to consider the question of European importance and to agree to a settlement by the Powers."

"Sazonoff suggests a second alternative for settlement on both local and European bases," and Germany's insolent answer is an "Imperial decree proclaiming a state of war in Germany." Whereupon, "Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland mobilize." "The Kaiser sends a message to the Czar promising 'on the word of a soldier' to stop mobilization, if Russia will do the same." "The Czar immediately orders the war minister to stop mobilization." Germany evidently had not expected to be taken at her word and "sends an anti-mobilization ultimatum."

On the very next day, August first, a day that for centuries to come will stand out as the world's *dies irae*, Germany declares war on Russia. King George makes a personal appeal to the Czar to avert war if possible.

The next day Germany sends ultimatums to Belgium and Luxemburg, demanding passage for her troops, and Belgium, hero of the nations, declares she will defend her neutrality.

Then, early in the morning of August third, Germany takes the irrevocable step that has alienated her from the right-thinking peoples of the world: Her solemn treaties are a "scrap of paper," and at seven in the morning she enters Belgium with three army corps. Sir Edward Grey declares to the German Ambassador in London that "England is bound to defend Belgium's neutrality," and refuses the bribe Germany offers England for neutrality.

France and Germany acknowledge a state of war between them, and each withdraws its ambassadors.

August fourth. England declares war on Germany!

The long strain of nearly two weeks was over. We had our passports, our papers were packed, and my brief career as a diplomat was ended. I was glad to have it over; I was eager to reach England and get into khaki, but there were two farewells yet to be said. Each of them would cost me some poignant regrets, but one of them, I hoped, would be only "au revoir," and that for no long interval of waiting; the other, I feared, might be for all time.

I had seen little of either Beatrice or Baron von Dreidorf during these two weeks; there had been much at the embassy to absorb every moment and every thought. Now my time was short, my farewells must be brief, for this would be my last evening in Berlin.

I called up Beatrice first and made an appointment with her at the American embassy for that evening. Then I called up the baron. I was not sure that he would care to see me now, nor, if he did, could I quite determine where to meet him. I knew he would not want to come to our embassy, and I feared I might compromise him, should I go to his rooms. At this moment the hatred of the English in Berlin was intense; a spark might set it in a blaze. I certainly did not wish to involve von Dreidorf in the conflagration.

No one could have been more friendly, however, than the baron over the telephone. Here was one man who would not allow his political enmities to affect his private friendships.

"I must certainly see you before you leave, Hatfield,"

he declared, but he was embarrassed, as I had been to find a place for our meeting.

"Wait a moment," he said, as I refused his invitation to go to his rooms—an invitation I knew was given from a courteous sense of obligation—"how would it do to meet me at the American embassy? Miss Ludlow had an engagement with me this evening, but she has just called up to break it, because she said you were making a *pour prendre conger* call. If you can decide at about what hour your call will be over, I can meet you there." And on that we agreed. The American embassy was neutral territory.

When I had telephoned Beatrice, I had begged her to allow me to make arrangements for her and Miss Martin to go to England with our staff. Getting out of Berlin, with every train used to hurry troops to the west, would prove a serious difficulty for anyone except an ambassador and his staff; for their safe-conduct everything else must give way. But Beatrice said that she and Miss Martin had been invited to remain with their friends at the American embassy, and that they had decided to do so. I did not urge the matter further over the telephone, but I was soon to see her and I determined to leave no stone unturned to prevail upon both her and Miss Martin to leave Berlin with us. No one could tell what horrors a war like this might bring forth. To stay in the very heart of a country beleaguered on both sides was foolhardy to a degree.

There seemed to me, when I met Beatrice in the drawing-room of the embassy, a slight constraint in her manner, such as I had never noticed before. It had not been there when I had said good-by to her in Leipzig, nor

when I had said good-by to her on the terrace of the Villa Nuova. This was my third good-by, and if she would not go with me on the morrow, it was likely to be much the longest.

Perhaps it was the presence of Miss Martin that embarrassed her, I said to myself, for Miss Martin was present when I entered, but cloaked as if for immediate departure.

"I have just waited to tell you good-by, Mr. Hatfield; I am going out to dinner," she said, without her usual italics.

"But I don't want to say good-by, Miss Martin, I want you and Miss Ludlow to go with us tomorrow. My ambassador says he can offer you safe-conduct as part of his family."

"Do you *hear*, Beatrice?" and I thought she spoke a little wistfully. Perhaps she wanted to go, and Beatrice had persuaded her to remain. "The English ambassador will see us through."

"But I thought you wanted to stay, Miss Martin? I thought you wanted to see something of war," Beatrice remonstrated.

"Yes, I *did* say so. But when I see Mr. Hatfield going away, it makes me a little *homesick*. Suppose we reconsider. What do you say?"

"Oh, no, please." Beatrice spoke hurriedly, almost with the air of being a little frightened. "We've promised, you know."

"Yes, that's *true*, Mr. Hatfield," said Miss Martin, turning to me regretfully. "We've *promised*. And *Yankees* never go back on their word, even if it isn't written on 'a scrap of paper.'"

I was not quite certain how they stood on the war question, and so I was glad to hear Miss Martin's sarcastic reference to the "scrap of paper."

"Then you don't like the German way?" I asked.

"I like some of the *Germans*, but not all of their *ways*," she answered quickly. "But there, I must be going or I will be late for my dinner. Good-by, Mr. Hatfield, and I *hope* we'll meet again 'when this cruel war is over.' You young people don't know that song, I suppose. Sweethearts sang it in the 'sixties."

Despite her effort at flippancy, I think Miss Martin was really sorry to say good-by to me. She looked so, and I was certainly sorry to say good-by to her.

"Perhaps it won't be good-by; perhaps I'll persuade Miss Ludlow to go with us tomorrow. If I do, will you go, too?" I asked, as I gave her hand a friendly squeeze.

"Of course. Do your best. I'm not awfully keen on staying; I'd just as soon go."

But if Miss Martin would "just as soon go," I soon discovered that Beatrice would not. Her mind was made up. I wondered to whom that promise had been given. Could it have been to Baron von Dreidorf? To all my arguments, and they grew rather heated as I found myself dashing futilely against the stone wall of her will, Beatrice replied simply: "I have given my word."

"To whom?" I demanded brutally, when patience had at last given way to irritation. "To the baron?"

She colored quickly,—I was not sure whether from anger or embarrassment,—but answered coolly:

"I have promised the American ambassador and his wife."

"They will readily release you from your promise. Indeed, I believe when I have set the matter before them in its true light they will urge your going."

"I think not. But I have also, as you surmised, given my word to—Baron von Dreidorf."

I was struck dumb for a moment. There was something in the sound of her words that seemed to mean more than a mere promise to remain in Berlin. It was a full minute before I could sufficiently recover control of myself to speak steadily.

"Beatrice, what do you mean?" I demanded sternly. "Do you mean you are engaged to the baron? I have a right to ask."

"No, not engaged. Yes, Hugh,"—she had thought a moment and was speaking very gently now—"you have a right to ask. And although I am not engaged to Baron von Dreidorf, I believe I ought to tell you that he has asked me to marry him."

"And you have accepted him?"

"No; but I have not refused him."

"You are keeping *two* of us dangling on the string!" I exclaimed bitterly.

"Hugh! You have no right to speak to me in that way," she said, still gently, but with a little ring in her voice, a small spark in her brown eyes, and a swift and beautiful dash of flame in her cheeks that brought me to my senses with a shock.

"No, I have n't, Beatrice, and I beg your pardon," I said humbly. "I was wild for the moment. I believe I thought you were engaged to me. I believe I have thought so ever since that afternoon in the Rosenthal."

"O Hugh!" she began, infinite pity, regret, or some-



thing in her voice, but I stopped her and went on miserably:

"I remember very well what I told you: 'I had not proposed and you had not refused, and if any man should come that you liked better, you were free to take him.' Only—only—I did n't believe he would come."

"But, Hugh—"

"It 's all right, Beatrice. I do not wonder. I do not see how any woman could help loving Baron von Dreidorf, if he wanted her to love him. I don't wonder that you like him better than you do me. I would—"

"But I 'm not sure I do, Hugh," she broke into my speech at last.

"Not *sure*?"

"No!" and now it was she who spoke miserably and with a little catch in her voice that went to my heart. "You will never understand, Hugh; a man like you, so simple, so direct, so sure of himself, never *could* understand how weak and vacillating a woman can be. How hard it is to know one's own heart. I like you both so much, but I don't want to be in love with either of you and I don't want to marry either of you. Why do I have to?"

"You don't have to, Beatrice." I could hardly forbear a smile as I said it, unhappy as I was, for her air was that of a little child compelled to do something against its will. "Very certainly you don't have to marry me; I will withdraw my suit, if you say so."

I almost thought she was going to take me at my word, so long she sat with eyes down, the color coming and going in her cheeks, her slender hands nervously toying with a huge feather fan. She was sitting where

an electric light fell upon her hair, bringing out shades of gold in the brown, and bringing out, also, the delicate tints of cheek and throat in a dazzling white and rose. She was wearing some filmy gown of pale turquoise blue—a color I have always thought supremely beautiful for dark hair and eyes—and as I sat there for what seemed to me to be ages, the while she evidently was coming to some determination, I took in every tint and line of the dazzling picture with the grim delight one feels in pressing a tender spot to aggravate pain. She was the fairest woman in the world, but she was not for me. Her beauty would be well-mated with the god-like beauty of Siegfried, who could give her wealth and place and power. Who was I—well enough to look upon if compared with men of ordinary clay, a man of some ambition, of fairly good intellectual “parts” and some excellencies of heart and character—to enter the lists against Baron von Dreidorf, a man possessed of every quality to win a woman and who, in addition, could give her everything? Who was I to ask her to share the life of poverty and struggle which is all a younger son has to offer? I sat there, grimly waiting, nerving myself to bear the blow I knew was sure to fall.

At last she lifted her eyes.

“Hugh,” she said, “you will think me weak and wicked. I know I ought to let you go, and allow you to find the woman you ought to marry, but—but—I can’t give you up—and—I don’t want to marry you. I’d spoil your career.”

A blinding ray of hope dazed me for a moment. I had been plunged in black despair, sure that all was over, and now she “did not want to give me up.” No

wonder that, in the dazzling light of a new hope, I could not at once see straight. But it was only for a moment. My career? My career was over. I no longer was even a poor under-secretary of legation. I was going home to join the army, and if I had been poor before, I would be poorer now. No, this was no time to take advantage of a tender girl's yielding mood. I must give her up, and do it now, once and forever. I must no longer stand in the way of the brilliant future offered her. So I gathered together all my strength and firmness.

"It is I who have been weak and wicked, Beatrice; you have been good to think of me, even for a moment. I am not going to stand in your way any longer"—my voice grew steadier and stronger as I went on—"I am going to get out and leave the field to the baron. He is worthy of you, and he can give you everything you ought to have. You could not 'spoil my career,' for I no longer have a career. From this day, until the war is over, I am the poorest of fortuneless soldiers. I have been wild to dream of winning any woman—you, of all women! I give up all my claims. You are absolutely free, Beatrice, as far as I am concerned."

She seemed to have heard only one word.

"War! You are not going into the war, Hugh?"

"Why, of course," I said simply, and I think I must have looked my surprise that she could have supposed anything else.

"Oh, but war is so terrible!"

Her hands were clasped tightly on her breast, her eyes wide with horror, as if she were already looking on bloody battlefields.

"War is glorious!" I said, for I did not know of what I was talking.

"Hugh, don't say that. War is awful! And this war was so unnecessary."

"Do you think Russia should have left little Servia to fight it out alone?"

"No, I suppose not. Poor little Servia! But I am afraid she has sown the wind and is now reaping the whirlwind."

"What do you mean? Are you accusing her of Francis Ferdinand's murder?"

"No; I do not believe the nation was responsible for that. But I am thinking of how she murdered her king and queen and set the murderer on the throne. I believe such crimes are always avenged in time."

I let that pass, for I thought so too.

"Then do you think France should have stood aside and allowed the others to fight it out?" I persisted.

"No; I believe France knew her very existence was threatened. *Hers* is a war of self-defense."

"Then it must be England who is in the wrong to be fighting."

She hesitated a moment before she said:

"I believe England is absolutely in the right. She is the one nation I am proud to see fighting. She is redeeming her pledged word to a helpless little nation."

"I'm glad that's the way you feel," I said soberly. "Perhaps there is no glory in war, as war, but there is glory in keeping one's word."

"So I think."

Something in her tone reminded me of her word given to remain in Berlin.

"Why did you give that promise, Beatrice?" I asked desperately. There might be some hope for me in a distant future, if she would go back to England with me, but none if she stayed in Berlin.

"Because I could n't help it, I believe. Why have I seen almost nothing of you for two weeks, Hugh?" she asked, with what seemed to me intentional irrelevance.

"Because we have been snowed under with work at the embassy. But why do you ask?"

"Because during those two weeks I have seen Baron von Dreidorf nearly every day, and sometimes several times a day. Every fresh piece of news he came to talk over with me, and he always insisted: 'If war is declared, I want you to promise me that you will stay in Berlin.' And so at last I promised."

"But you did not have to promise."

"If you know Baron von Dreidorf well, you know that when one is with him one always *wants* to do as he says. There is something about him that takes one's breath away. Even Miss Martin is fascinated by him. You know she has always been your strong friend at court, but I believe in these last two weeks she has been won over. At least, she is quite willing to stay in Berlin."

Somehow Miss Martin's defection hurt more than I liked to admit. I had counted on her as a friend, and a powerful one. I think I must have showed my chagrin in my countenance, for Beatrice said, with an effort at lightness, of which there had been little in this gloomy conversation:

"Don't look so sorrowful about it. It's only when she's with the baron that she is dazzled by him; the minute she sees you she's back on your side again."

Did n't you notice how ready she was to accept your offer of safe-conduct to England?"

"Yes; I could have persuaded her if you had n't interfered. Why *did* you, Beatrice?"

"My word, you know."

"There are times," I said ruefully, "when one can sympathize with Germany's breaking her word. At least, there are times when one would like to make the other fellow break his word and forgive him for it."

"And despise him, too, I suppose?"

"Yes, I suppose so," I admitted reluctantly. "But for how long have you promised to stay in Germany? Till the war is over?"

"Oh, no!" she ejaculated, with something like horror. "Though Baron von Dreidorf and all the Germans, I suppose, think the war will be only a matter of a few weeks."

"I hope it will, but I doubt it. I know it will never end until Germany is whipped."

I spoke grimly and Beatrice said nothing, though she did not look as if she entirely disapproved of the sentiment.

"But how long *do* you expect to stay?" I persisted.

"I have simply promised to remain until the first wild excitement is over. Whether we stay longer or not depends upon whether we find ourselves safe and comfortable and happy, I suppose."

"You admit," I said gloomily, "that when you are with Baron von Dreidorf you are fascinated by him, and you intimate—or I hope you intimated—that when you are away from him he loses some of his influence and I regain some of mine. Now I am to go beyond even

the reach of a letter or a telegram, while he is to stay where you can see him every day and hour."

"I do not suppose he will remain in Berlin."

"Why? Does he go to the war?"

"Of course. He is on the General Staff, I believe. I do not know whether that takes him to the front, or keeps him at headquarters in Berlin."

A footman entered with a card, the Baron von Dreidorf's. Could it possibly be eleven o'clock? This was the hour I had named to the baron.

"Beatrice," I said hurriedly, as the man went back to the reception-room to summon the visitor, "does the baron know you have told me he has asked you to marry him?"

"He asked me to tell you," she said with a slight blush. There was time for nothing more, for the baron was announced.

I had a chance to watch him critically, enviously, as he came forward to pay his respects to Beatrice, and I had to confess, with a heavy heart, that it would be a strange woman who could resist such a man. Strength, radiant vitality, power, high breeding, seemed to radiate from the man like a sensible emanation as he made his impressive German bow. He was in the gorgeous pale blue and silver uniform of the Royal Saxon Guard, and no man could have been more magnificent to look upon.

Then he turned to me. There was a perceptible hesitation in his manner and a diffident questioning in his brilliant blue eyes which yet looked straight into mine.

"How do you do, Baron?" I said, extending my hand.

"Eleven o'clock comes soon, does n't it? But I 'm very glad to see you."

He grasped my hand with evident relief and a grip of iron.

"How do you do, Hugh?" he said simply. "I hope I 'm not too early."

After a few minutes Beatrice made some excuse and left us to ourselves. I had not said good-by to her, at least in any fashion that I liked, but perhaps it was as well.

During the half hour the baron and I spent together in the embassy drawing-room we came to a thorough understanding concerning each other. We were both suitors, we would each leave no stone unturned to win Beatrice, but I, alas, would have few or no stones to turn! It was plainly evident that Baron von Dreidorf was confident of success, just as it was evident that I was in the depths of despair.

At the very last, when we were on our feet to go, the baron said to me:

"This will make no difference in our friendship, Hugh?"

"None in mine."

"Nor in mine. Whatever happens, whoever wins, you and I will be friends?"

"True friends," I answered.

"And this horrible war—I hate it!—shall make no difference, either? We will be foes in form, but friends in heart?"

"We will always be friends."

"Give me your hand, Hugh."



I gave it to him, and once more he gripped it like iron.

"We have never sworn *Bruderschaft*, Hugh; we will swear it now: 'Till death do us sever.'"

"'Till death do us sever,'" I repeated from my heart, and in one lightning-like backward glance thought of Marcel.

At the door we said good-by with another fervent handclasp. In the act of turning away I was startled by a deep growl and a muttered "Damnation!"

I turned back quickly, just in time to see a dark figure slinking out of sight.

"What is it, Siegfried?" For strangely enough that was the baron's name. "Who was it?" I demanded.

"It's Keltowitch again, spying on us. Either I will do that fellow a hurt some day, or he will do me one. *Detestable swine!*"

## CHAPTER XIX

### ON THE CHER

**A**LL the way to Flushing, or rather that part of it that lay in Germany, we began to realize what war meant. Much of the time our car was attached to a troop-train. The singing of the soldiers, the shouting of the populace when we stopped at stations, the taking on of new regiments at various points, wives, sweethearts, and little children marching with the men to the station and sending them off with smiles, waving hands, and cheerful farewells, with never a tear allowed to fall—it was as if all Germany was having a gala day over this awful business of going to war.

As we neared Oberhausen my chief pointed out to me in the distance the chimneys of the great Krupp factories at Essen. I had wanted to visit them, but of course it had been impossible to obtain a permit. I had been anxious to visit them merely as a matter of curiosity; I had not believed that these monster dogs of war would ever be turned loose against flesh and blood. Now, as I gazed out of the window, I fancied I could see a long line of them, black and sinister, winding down into Belgium.

At Oberhausen we stopped for dinner, but had small chance of getting anything to eat. The troops from our train and from many trains converging here must all be fed, and who could blame German *kellners* and Ger-

man landlords if they had scant time or little food left for the hated English! One of the younger attachés and I went out to forage for our chief, and we brought him a pot of tea, some rolls, and a dish of sliced ham-and-liver sausages. He was grateful to us, and since he insisted on sharing with us we got out of Germany without suffering too severely from the pangs of hunger.

At Oberhausen we parted from the troops, still shouting and singing their war-songs and still waved forward by cheering men and women. Their train rolled on to Belgium and Liège, while we changed to one taking us through Holland to Flushing. But their spirit had been infectious. I forgot for the time being that I had left Beatrice behind in an enemy's country, that she was certain to marry my rival and friend, and thought only of war and glory, longing eagerly to be at home and wearing the khaki.

My idea of war has changed so greatly during the months that have passed that I find it hard to recall the visions of fame and glory that danced in my brain as we rolled through the peaceful Netherland landscape, beside long, straight canals shining like paths of gold in the evening sunlight and bordered by endless lines of stately poplars, or through rich, green meadows where immense herds of black and white Holsteins stood knee deep in the luscious clover. War began to seem a gala occasion for me, also, as it had for those German troops making the welkin ring with their "Deutschland, Deutschland, über Alles!"

I think I pictured myself in scarlet and gold riding into battle on my charger Selim at the head of a company of brave boys, and with brandished sword lead-

ing them on to a brief but terrific encounter with a foe greatly outnumbering us, but only too glad, after a taste of our steel, to surrender unconditionally. I never seemed to think of myself as anything less than a captain, yet I had had no military training and I did not even know the manual of arms. With my brother Harold it was different. He had been for a year, or ever since leaving Oxford, at a military school, and now was with his regiment at Aldershot, the proud owner of a captain's commission.

He and my father were to meet me in London, and I never for a moment doubted that my father would buy me a captain's commission, just as he had for Harold. When we left Oxford I had chosen diplomacy and Harold had elected the army, but now was no time for diplomacy. My father would want me to go into the army; every patriotic father would wish his son to respond to the call to arms in such an hour. I had a high idea of my father's patriotism.

But I did not know my father. His patriotism was loftier than my conception of it.

"No, Hugh," he said kindly, but with that look in his eyes from which I had long since learned there was no appeal, "it is all very well to buy captains' commissions for untrained soldiers in times of peace, but in war time there is too much at stake. Enlist as a private, and when you have learned the manual and proved your metal I will gladly buy you the commission."

In my heart I knew my father was right, but I felt bitterly disappointed.

"Harold is to have everything, as usual," I said, in a temper.

"Oh, Hugh!" Harold began, but my father interrupted him.

"Harold would not have had his commission if it had not happened, almost by accident, that he has had a year's training."

He still spoke gently, for he appreciated the keenness of my disappointment.

"And, Hugh," said Harold quickly, "I wish I could give you my commission, but I can't. If you will enlist in my company, I will see that you get your promotions rapidly; I will make you corporal and sergeant in no time, and as soon as you've qualified as sergeant you will be ready for a commission. Won't he, sir?"

But even I knew that would never work; I must earn my promotion by merit, not favoritism, and I was quite ready for my father's veto. I was not to enlist in Harold's company, though, if possible, my father would find a place for me in another company in the same regiment so that I might be near Harold.

I had the grace to be ashamed of my petty spirit of envy, in strong contrast to Harold's generosity, and so I told him. I told him, moreover, what I knew in my heart was true, that though he seemed to have come into his inheritance and his command by good luck, the fortunate thing about it all was that these things had come to him and not to me, for he was better fitted for both,—better fitted to rule at the Abbey and to command in war. All my life I had been buried in books; I had allowed the real things of life to go by me. Harold had missed nothing that an eager spirit, a keen eye, and an alert mind could grasp, and now

he was ready to take his part in a position of responsibility.

Harold was at Aldershot, but he secured a day's leave to spend with me before I should enlist and no longer be my own master. It was the first day we had had together for over a year, and who could tell that it would not be the last we would ever share together? We determined to spend it at Oxford; it was richer in associations for both of us than any other spot in England, except, of course, the Abbey. But it would have taken the entire day to get down to Devon and back—the Abbey was out of the question.

Neither of us had ever been in Oxford through the long vac, and it was as little like the Oxford we knew as any place could well be. It was doleful enough, at first, and we were almost sorry we had come—the deserted quads flaunting their gay canterbury-bells, delphinium and phlox for no one to see, the lonely High, with its occasional pedestrian instead of thronging caps and gowns, and even Carfax quiet beyond belief. But when we had been up to Christ Church and our old scout, McCreery, had shown us our old rooms, the walls of the sitter lined with the unfamiliar books and pictures of some other chap; peeped in at the deserted Hall, its chairs and tables piled forlornly on the platform where the dons dined; strolled down the Broad Walk and through The Meadows and at last hunted up our landlady in the old diggings on the High, where we had spent our last year in Oxford, we began to feel more at home.

To begin with, Miss Barton was genuinely glad to see us. She insisted on serving luncheon in our old sitter,

with the table drawn up in the big bow-window overhanging the High and giving us the view we loved of the most beautiful street in Europe, the slim and lovely tower of St. Mary's in the foreground and a glimpse of the hoary towers of Magdalen farther down the winding street. Miss Barton had been famous for setting the best table that any digs in Oxford could boast, and she did not belie her reputation. We had all the dishes that she remembered our liking best, and it was she who proposed that she give us a tea-basket so that we could take our tea up the Cher.

Four o'clock found us punting lazily under the overhanging trees of Addison's walk and talking of Belden as we looked up at Magdalen's famous tower. Belden of Magdalen had been, by common consent, the most brilliant man Oxford had sent down in years. Magdalen was inordinately proud of him, and even we of the House were more or less envious that we could not claim him. He had gone down when Harold and I went down, but Harold had gone straight to Sandhurst and I had gone abroad, and though we three had been great chums at The Bullingdon, neither of us had seen him since. And now, six weeks ago, Belden had "gone down" forever—gone down into a suicide's grave, but not until all that brilliant intellect, that gay bonhomie and delightful wit had been wrecked, snuffed out like a candle by an overwhelming tide of liquor. "Drank himself to death," was the verdict of his friends. Poor Belden!

We were talking of him in the subdued tones one unconsciously adopts in speaking of those who have "gone down."

"Harold," I said, as we slid out from under the heavy shadows of Magdalen into a long reach of sunlight, "does it ever occur to you that perhaps there is too much drinking at Oxford?"

"What do you mean?" asked Harold indignantly. He was punting and I was lolling at ease among the cushions. His erect figure, sharply outlined in black against the sun and swaying with the grace of strength as he sent the punt skimming upstream, seemed to bristle with indignation at the mere suggestion that there could be anything wrong with Oxford.

"What do you mean, Hugh?" he repeated, with a vicious punt to add emphasis to his question.

"Nothing much," I sidestepped. "Yes, I do";—I was not going to be a coward—"you know as well as I that to get roaring drunk over the Bullingdon wines, or even in our own digs to get happy on whiskey and soda, or mellow on port or sherry, was a common occurrence. Not you, for you were always moderate, and not I very often, but lots of our chums drank too much and too often. I remember Belden as a pink-faced Fresher from Eton, and I well remember how some of the chaps laughed at him because he was afraid to drink. But before the end of his third year he was the hardest drinker in The Bullingdon. Now, you know, I begin to think drinking, heavy drinking, is an English vice, and I wonder if it's going to count against us in this war."

"English! What are the Germans but a nation of beer sots? And the Russians but vodka inebriates? And the French but absinthe fiends?" Harold fairly shouted in his indignation.



"Yes, I know that 's the way we think of them, but in the two days I have been in England I have seen more blear-eyed drunkenness on the streets than I saw all the time I was in Germany. At Leipzig there was a good deal of drinking among the students at the trink-halles and weingartens, but it never amounted to more than a few steins of beer or a tiny glass of cognac, and one seldom saw a chap the worse for his liquor."

"Have you joined the Salvation Army?" growled Harold.

"Not yet," I laughed. "But they're doing some good among our Tommy Atkinses. When it comes to war, I think even Tommy Atkins needs a clear head and steady legs."

But I could see that Harold did not agree with me enthusiastically, and as I had not intended preaching a temperance sermon, nor wished to allow anything to mar the peace and good fellowship of this day with Harold in dear old Oxford, I changed my theme for one always dear to his heart—the time when we both rowed on the Eight and the House went head of the river, and the bump supper after, when even Harold got uproariously drunk—as was necessary, since he was captain and the victory a glorious one—and I was almost as bad; and the hundreds of Roman candles we sent off after supper; and the big bonfires we built in Tom quad, with the town folk crowding round the gates to see.

Our theme did not fail us until the windings of the Cher brought us at last to some peaceful meadows where a little grove of beeches offered shade and coolness for our tea. The river had been almost deserted. It required little skill to punt along its smooth stretches,

with only an occasional boat to pass where some Oxford clerk, who would never venture on the river in term, was awkwardly handling the long sweep, while his girl reclined among the cushions. It was a different matter in term, when the winding little river was often so crowded that only the most skilful punters could make any headway.

The hour that we lay on the sweet-smelling grass of the meadow after we had finished tea, the shadows of the beeches lengthening with the sinking of the sun, was an hour whose sweetness, I pray God, will dwell in my memory forever. I had always loved and admired Harold, but never so much as on that fragrant afternoon when we lay on the grass together and watched the white clouds sailing so slowly through the deep blue above that they scarcely seemed to move, while we recalled boyish adventures at the Abbey, school adventures at Eton, and the richer experiences of Oxford. We talked of the future, too, and what we would do with our lives. "If, please God," said Harold soberly, "we come back safe from this war."

In that one short year since we had left Oxford our outlook on life had changed materially. More, perhaps, for me than for Harold. Harold was the gay young officer, brave and debonair, and his future was assured. Life held few problems for him, and he was not in love. At least I believed he was not, and I have come to think that nothing makes quite so radical a change in a man's outlook on life as a serious love affair.

So I, who was by nature of graver temper than Harold, had grown graver still through experience, while Harold had retained all a boy's overflowing en-

thusiasms. It was I who did most of the philosophizing.

"It all seemed very earnest, and very rich, and very full didn't it, Harold?" I moralized, apropos of life at Oxford. "And we were sure life could never be so interesting again. Do you remember how melancholy we both were when the time drew near to go down?"

"I remember," said Harold, "but you were a little more melancholy than I; you took everything a little harder."

"Did I? Well, I seem to get over things easily enough now, for this last year has been more to me than all my four years in Oxford."

"In what way, Hugh? I'm not sure I could say quite that for myself."

"In every way. For one thing, I have learned to stand alone. You remember how I always leaned on you."

"No, I don't remember. I think I leaned quite as much on you. I certainly did when it came to getting ready for Schools. I would have been 'plowed' again, that last term, I'm sure, if you hadn't pulled me through, old Hugh."

"Oh, Schools! They don't count. It's the practical, everyday affairs I'm speaking of. I was always a bit of a dreamer, while you always knew exactly what to do in any emergency. But I've waked up a bit this last year; I've learned to rely on myself."

Harold looked at me suspiciously.

"Hugh, I believe you're in love," he challenged.

For a moment it was on the tip of my tongue to tell him I was in love, to tell him about Beatrice. I have been sorry since that I did not yield to the impulse, but

then, Beatrice was in Berlin with Siegfried and it all seemed so hopeless. I hoped Harold did not notice my hesitation.

"Nonsense!" I replied to his charge, and then plunged ahead recklessly in my generalizations to cover my confusion. "I think the men I've met this last year have been more interesting than our Oxford chaps. I suppose it is because they were men, men of affairs, not boys. Do you remember, Harold, how we judged every new chap we met by whether he turned up his trousers and left the lower button of his waistcoat unbuttoned? A silly criterion, was n't it?"

"Oh, I don't know. I think it still makes a little difference with me in my first impressions," Harold answered easily, still looking at me curiously, but not pressing his charge.

"Does it? Do you know, I believe I never notice it at all. I can't recall at this moment whether the most interesting man I met abroad does either. I suppose I still do, unconsciously, but I'm not sure," and I glanced down at waistcoat and trouser-leg as I spoke.

"You're all right, Hugh," Harold laughed. "But who was he?"

"Who was who?"

"The most interesting man you met abroad?"

"Perhaps I ought n't to say the most interesting; there really were two who interested me immensely."

And then I proceeded to tell him at length about my acquaintance with Siegfried and Marcel, and incidentally the Rumanian and the Pole, but not a word about Beatrice.

Harold seemed greatly interested and my confidences

inspired like ones from him, until the long shadows reminded us that we would have to hurry or we would miss the next London train, and be late for the "governor's" dinner at his club.

Going back I did the punting; it was down stream and easy work. We were both rather quiet, for I, at least, was experiencing something of the same melancholy I had felt at going down the year before. Coming once more under the walls of the Magdalen quads and the overhanging elms of Addison's Walk, the Cher now lying in shadow as sombre as my thoughts, I heard a prodigious sigh from the bow.

"What is it, Harold?" I said, and strained my eyes to look at him.

"Do you think we will ever see it again, old Hugh?" he asked, and to my amazement there was a little break in his voice. "It's so beautiful, and—I love it so!"

Harold! dear old Harold! I never remembered his betraying the slightest emotion or sentiment before over anything in his life. Now, in my hasty glance, for I had turned quickly away again, I could almost have sworn I had seen something glistening in his eyes.

"Sure, old boy," I answered gruffly, to cover my sympathy. "We'll both be back in a year taking some bally degree at the Sheldonian and getting swiped on the head by the chancellor with that funny little old Bible of his."

## CHAPTER XX

### MONS

**T**O my father a dinner at his club and introducing his two boys to his old chums was an affair of moment not to be lightly treated. He did not often come up to London these days, and though the dinner promised to be dull and formal enough, not for worlds would either Harold or I have hurt his feelings by any unpunctuality or apparent lack of eagerness on our part.

And after all, the dinner was not so bad, and when it was over we left the "governor" to enjoy his port and cigars with some old cronies and went off to a music-hall, where we both looked on at the frivolities much more critically than either of us would have done a year before. We voted only one thing on the program any good at all: a rather pretty girl sang "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary," and the house went wild, with every man on his feet and joining in the chorus in a mighty volume that nearly lifted the roof.

We left the music-hall early and went out on the streets in search of news—"the only interest in life just now," Harold said. We found that the Russians were still pouring into East Prussia and that Liège was still holding out. We could go to bed in peace, and some hours earlier than we would have considered it the thing to do in Oxford.

The next morning I said good-by to Harold. He went off to Aldershot and I went down with my father to spend two days at the Abbey before enlisting. He had insisted on this, and I was nothing loath. I loved every stock and stone in beautiful Devon—the hills, the moors, the forests, the sea—and I loved the Abbey with an intensity that devoured avidly every well-remembered stately beech and spreading oak as we rolled through the long avenue of the Abbey park.

The house is rather impressive when it first bursts on one at a turn in the avenue, with its long Tudor façade, its broad terrace and parterres of flowers, and below the terrace the winding lake dotted with stately white swans. I had almost forgotten how beautiful it was, and it quite took my breath. And then there came, after that first glimpse, the quick pang that I had felt once or twice before—it would never be mine! It was an ungenerous emotion and I put it quickly away, ashamed to have felt it even for a moment.

I saw much of my father during those two days, more than I had seen of him in all my life before. He seemed unwilling to let me out of his sight. He tramped with me through the park and the woods, down to the fisherman's cove by the sea and up on the high combe that shuts off the fierce northwest winds from the Abbey.

On the second evening we came home from a long tramp, I, at least, almost too tired to dress. But I knew my father would never condone any lack of formality at dinner, and after a bath and getting into dinner-clothes I was fresh enough to enjoy the particularly good dinner Gaston sent up and Wilkins served with such pride. I knew it was a special dinner in my honor.

There was not a servant on the place but was mourning "Mr. Hugh's" departure for the war, as a few days before they had mourned "Mr. Harold's."

The evening was cool, and Wilkins set the logs blazing in the fireplace of the dining-room and drew up a stand in front of it, with my father's bottle of port and my claret on the stand, and cigars and cigarettes and a deep armchair for each of us. It was later, when he had brought in our coffee and we knew that we were alone for the evening, that my father turned to me with something in his usually stately manner that struck me oddly like embarrassment.

"Hugh," he began, hesitating, "I never told you that almost the last words of your mother were of you. I think she thought"—here his embarrassment visibly increased—"that, since Harold was my first-born and my heir, I might naturally be a little fonder of him. Of course, to a father, his two sons are equally dear, but also, of course, there are certain considerations due the older son that might easily have led your mother into that mistake. Her exact words were: 'Take good care of Hugh. Hugh will always look after Harold, but I'm afraid there will be no one to look after Hugh.'"

My father stopped, and whether he was waiting for me to say something, or not, I could not be sure. I was greatly embarrassed, but, also, I was deeply moved. There had never been any doubt in my mind that Harold was my father's favorite son, and I had never resented it; to me, too, it seemed only natural that he should be. To learn now that my mother had recognized it, and that in her last moments her heart yearned



toward the younger son she feared might be neglected, moved me in a way that for a time made it impossible for me to speak. My father waited a moment, and then he spoke again.

"Hugh, you have not thought I felt any difference?" he asked anxiously.

"You have always been the best of fathers, sir," I answered a little unsteadily, and with an irresistible impulse I extended my hand across the little table to him. He grasped it and pressed it ardently. It was the nearest to a caress I ever remembered from my father, and again it was near my undoing.

The next morning I left the Abbey with another strong handclasp from my father and a "God bless you, Hugh" that sounded like a benediction to my unaccustomed ears, and that was spoken as unsteadily as my own "Good-by, Sir."

A place had been found for me in Harold's regiment, and my captain proved to be a very good sort. I was given private drill for two days, and then a point was strained and I was allowed to join the regiment. It was all tremendously exciting, but though so short a time ago, it is a little blurred in my memory now. Other events have crowded out my recollections of those first days in the ranks. I know that I was immensely patriotic, immensely in earnest, and determined to rise from the ranks, if possible. And I remember that I was greatly surprised by the apparent indifference of most of the "Tommies"—old soldiers some of them, veterans of Khartoum and South Africa. I have come to think, since, that this indifference was assumed, that at heart they were as patriotic as I, but they did not consider it

the thing to wear their hearts on their sleeves; it was not good form with Tommy Atkins.

The sixteenth of August found us with sixty thousand of our comrades on the shores of France. Silently, in the dead of night, with no blare of trumpet or singing of triumphant songs, we had stolen out of England. There had been no wives and sweethearts and mothers to bid us God-speed and wave us on to victory. Indeed, there were few in England who knew we were going until we had landed in France—a strange contrast to the gala departure of the German soldiers for the scenes of war.

Ten days since I had left Berlin, but years of ordinary life would hold less of emotion and action, of thought and feeling, than had been compressed into those ten days. Even the thought of Beatrice grew vague and shadowy in the whirling maelstrom of new sensations. Yet one thing comes back to me quite vividly: the almost childish pleasure I took in the warm welcome the French gave us. I smile now as I recall myself mentally strutting. "Yes, we have come here to help you out; it is very noble of us," was my unacknowledged attitude.

But we did not linger long in Calais to receive the adulation of the French. We were rushed to the front, and in less than a week were in the thick of it. In that week I had time to learn the feeling of comradeship and to respect the brave fellows who tramped sturdily on either side of me after the long railroad trains had belched us out on the borders of Belgium to fare forward afoot, while they hurried back for other thousands to rush to the front.

The man on my right was a true cockney—born in the city slums, bred in the city streets, yet a thorough gentleman, as I had many a chance to prove. My short drill had not been long enough to give me endurance on the forced marches, and brave Bill Bradley was sorry for me. He insisted on helping me off with my boots at night, and brought water to bathe my blistered feet, binding them up so dexterously that the intolerable ache was more than half relieved. I began to love him like a brother.

There were many rumors on that march that began to trouble me. Where they came from I could not tell, but every day, when we stopped for noon rations or when we halted for the night, we heard of the onward sweep of the Germans in their terrible march—a mighty horde laying waste with fire and sword as they swept over the land, invincible, irresistible, nothing human could stay their progress. Scouts on motor-cycles were constantly meeting us on our march and with set faces flying past us toward headquarters. "Brussels was occupied by the Germans." "Namur was besieged." Rumors of inhuman cruelty, unwarlike, unsoldierlike, uncivilized, began to thicken the air, and I, marching through that peaceful country for the first few days so bravely and gaily, began to find myself sicken and grow weak. A horrible fear took possession of me and grew hourly—a fear of myself. Was I, after all, a coward? Was this overpowering nausea that seized me at thought of the battle so surely impending, toward which we were hurrying, driven forward by a force we were powerless to resist,—was this cowardice? Was it craven fear, the quality I had always most despised?

My only moments of relief were when Harold, at noon rations, came dashing up on his spirited horse for a moment's chat; or at evening when he came over and sat down by me for a talk. Evidently no slightest breath of fear had ever touched him; he was always gay, full of life, joyous, confident. "The Germans had never yet met the British. *Just wait!*"

How I adored him! And how I despised myself in contrast with him!

Then one morning in the early dawn we were roused from sleep. The hour had come. Silhouetted against the pale gray of the eastern sky, behind a low ridge, was a long, undulating line of helmets with streaming horse-hair plumes, and glittering lance-heads above the helmets catching the faint light in the east. Helmets and lance-heads were racing, and the undulating movement showed they were on horses.

"The Uhlans!" Bill Bradley muttered, and the word had an ominous sound. It was a weird sight in the ghostly gray of dawn, and once more the terrible nausea of fear seized me. White, and shaking like any poltroon I went into my first battle—that awful battle of Mons.

Mons! Where were all my dreams of glory? Was this trembling coward, sick and shaking at the roar and shriek of hurtling shells and the deafening din of bursting shrapnel, the brave fellow I had pictured leading his men on to victory? My arms almost refused to lift my rifle to my shoulder, and my trembling fingers scarcely had strength to fire it. An awful panic seized me lest there, in the presence of my comrades, I should betray myself the coward I was, should turn and run, anywhere, to the ends of the earth, out of all these sickening

sights and sounds. Men were falling around me, their groans and shrieks mingling with the roar of the guns. Could these be men I knew, writhing and twisting in mortal agony? Was that Bill Bradley, my friend, at my feet spitting out blood and horrible oaths?

Then all at once, inexplicably, my nerves steadied. A berserker rage seized me. From somewhere some one gave the order "Charge!" I knew we were to capture that battery that had been pouring its deadly fire into us only a few hundred rods away.

"Charge!" What did charge mean, but to rush with fixed bayonet straight on the foe. There was but one idea in my head—to get there! I must stop those guns that were mowing down my comrades like grass in the meadows. And I ran with the mad rush that had won many a hundred-yard dash at Oxford. I knew that I was far ahead of the others; that some one shouted "Halt!" that I was doing a foolhardy thing. But I could no more have stopped myself than if I had been a runaway horse in the hands of a child. Death was waiting for me by those belching guns, but I laughed at Death. Death and I were comrades now!

Behind the screen of bushes toward which I was running only two guns were concealed, the rest of the battery was hidden behind another clump of bushes a little distance away. And there were hardly a dozen men serving the guns, though as many more were lying on the ground, dead or dying from our own fire. They had been so well shut in by their screen of bushes, and so intent on their business of loading and firing steadily, that they did not see me until I was close upon them. I must have been an awful sight with that unholy rage

distorting my face, blood-spattered and powder-be-grimed, for they were brave men, yet they blanched at sight of me. As the gunner nearest me raised the iron rammer in his hand to defend himself, I ran him through with my bayonet.

A-a-a-a! The hideous sound of rending flesh and cracking bones, and the awful shriek he uttered! It will stay with me to my dying day. But hideous as was the sound—and even in that moment of mad rage my soul loathed it—it only added fuel to the flame of my raging passions.

The others were all upon me now, ten to one. Harold in jest had often called me Sir Galahad, because my strength was “as the strength of ten.” Now all my strength came to me. I was a terrible wild beast; I was no longer human. I saw through a red mist of blood as I swung my rifle around my head—there was no time now to use the bayonet—and sent two men toppling to their doom. Two more dropped like stones at my feet, to the horrid sound of the impact of crashing iron on crushed skulls. The others drew back terrified, for no one dared come within the terrific swing of that rifle butt.

But in a moment the brave fellows, dazed for an instant at my sudden onslaught, roused from their stupor. A young fellow, whom I took to be their officer, was the first to recover himself. Drawing his pistol as he spoke, he ordered his men to fire. This meant my end, but I would sell my life dearly. I could see a hundred men, —a thousand they seemed to me,—running up from where the rest of the battery was stationed to reinforce their comrades, and I felt a sudden rush of foolish pride

that it should take a whole battalion to conquer me.

More fiercely than before I swung my rifle, yet as I glanced at the face of the fair-haired young officer, his beauty was so like that of Siegfried that my heart failed me and I simply knocked up his pistol at the very moment of its discharge.

At the same instant I heard the reports of other pistols. I stood stock still, dazed. I was shot; why did I not fall?

But I was not shot. My friends were all around me and with wild cries were driving back the reinforcements that had come up a moment too late.

The guns were ours! Heated with victory our men rushed on to the other part of the battery—left almost defenseless by those who had come to help their comrades—and captured it.

“Hatfield, you’ve won the Victoria Cross!” my lieutenant shouted to me as he dashed up. “By Jove, it was *splendid!* I wish I were in your shoes!”

## CHAPTER XXI

### REACTION

**B**UT it did n't seem splendid to me. All the fire had gone out of my veins. I was deadly sick as I looked down at the brave fellows lying beside their guns and realized that I had sent them to their death.

The fire was gone, but I must fight steadily on. For forty-eight hours we fought, desperately waiting, hoping every moment for the sound of the French cavalry that never came to our relief. Every few minutes our captain, a brave old mustache, would dash along our line shouting: "Steady, men! It can't last much longer; the French will soon be here!"

And we fought on, doggedly, but they never came.

I have never heard why the French failed us in our moment of need, or rather, I have heard many reasons, but none that seemed adequate. Many of our men felt bitterly about it. They felt they had come to help the French and had been left shamefully in the lurch. For awhile there was danger of strained relations between the two armies, but during the days of desperate fighting that followed, the French came so often and so gallantly to the relief of their British comrades-in-arms that the bitter days of Mons were forgotten.

When we had fought desperately for nearly three



days, with only an hour or two for sleep and little to eat, we began the retreat to Le Cateau and St. Quentin. "Drawing the Germans into a trap," our colonel called it, when we all messed together in a little inn at Le Cateau—all, that is, that were left of our regiment, five officers and two hundred and fifty men. Of the officers, Harold was a newly made major of the regiment and I a first lieutenant of my company. Both lieutenants were gone; the one who said he would "like to be in my shoes" shot dead a few minutes after he had made that speech, and the second lieutenant, a young slip of a fellow, reported among the missing.

A masterly retreat, I've heard it called, and orderly, but I've wondered since what a rout must look like, if that was orderly. By our side, on that long retreat, rolled an endless stream of refugees, afoot and in every possible vehicle: the old, the feeble, patient women and children and wailing infants, miserably unhappy, driven from home and going they knew not where. Many a footsore soldier, who had been marching and fighting for days with neither food nor sleep to speak of, carried a baby for a mile or two to rest a tired mother. "It's them poor things what 'as to bear the brunt of it," they would say cheerfully, "an' it ain't their business, neither. Jes' wait till we send the bill to Kaiser Bill! It's a bloomin' shame, what?"

Even I, who feared a baby almost more than I had once feared battle, carried the soft bundles many a mile for exhausted mothers, and I lost my fear of them as I had lost my fear of shot and shell. I even began to see something of the charm in the clinging creatures that I had heretofore stoutly maintained they did not possess.

We fought all the way, step by step, with little to eat and almost no sleep. At Le Cateau the fighting grew desperate, and it was there I saw Harold—leading the charge we had just been ordered to make, and dashing forward on his horse, his sword waving, as I had once pictured myself—suddenly fall, struck by shrapnel. He had been urging the men forward, but they could not stand that iron rain of shrapnel bursting upon them suddenly from a concealed battery and fell back, leaving him alone on the field.

I heard my mother's words, repeated to me by my father: "Hugh will look after Harold." I was big and strong; Harold was slight in comparison. I dashed out into the hail of shrapnel, picked him up, threw him over my shoulder and ran back to our lines, while British and Germans held their fire a moment to cheer. I resented their cheers. They did not know he was my brother; no man would have done less.

Once in our lines I gave him to two men. "Carry him to the Red Cross," I ordered, and for days did not know whether he was dead or alive.

War! Oh, the horror of it! I never again felt a touch of fear, but as day by day we retreated over the fair fields of France from St. Quentin to the banks of the Marne, leaving, from no will of our own, foulness and devastation in place of fairness; I longed unutterably for the peaceful days of study at Leipzig and Oxford. Was the world never again to know them?

Across the Marne we had a little period of rest and for recovery. Fresh troops were to take our places for awhile and I had a little leisure to hunt up Harold. He was not badly hurt—a flesh wound that

would have amounted to nothing if it had been made by a rifle bullet instead of by shrapnel.

"I'll be back with the regiment in a week, Hugh. What! *Captain* Hugh? Quick work!"

"Yes," I answered. "There were no captains left in the regiment when you were promoted and my brave old captain fell. They had to make me one. Not much of an honor."

"I suppose they could have made any other man captain as well as you?"

"I suppose so," I admitted. "Harold, do you like it?" I asked abruptly.

"Like what?"

"War."

"I love it!" he answered, and his eyes sparkled in a way that convinced me of his sincerity. "Why, Hugh? Don't you like it?"

"I hate it!"

For a moment he was too astounded to speak. Then he raised himself slowly and with difficulty on his elbow—he was lying on a cot in the hospital—and looked straight in my face with an expression of mingled doubt and scorn.

"You don't mean you're *afraid*, Hugh?"

"No, thank God! I think I was during the first few minutes at Mons, but I've forgotten the sensation. It is not fear, but disgust, loathing, and an infinite pity for the poor fellows butchered like bees at the shambles, for no fault of their own, that nearly drives me mad at times."

"Do you mean you wish England had never gone into it?"

Harold's tone was still stern and judicial.

"No; England had to go in. I would have been the first to despise her if she had stayed out."

"Do you mean you are ready now for peace at any price?"

"Great heavens, *no!*" I thundered, so that a nurse at a little distance put up a warning finger. "No, Harold," I went on more quietly, "we must go through with it now, if we have to sacrifice the last man and the last shilling, until we can win such a peace as shall forever prevent the possibility of another such war."

For the first time Harold's face cleared.

"Then what *do* you mean, old Hugh?" he asked, laying his hand—which I grasped and held—affectionately in mine.

"I mean that I used to have visions of the glory of war, and I went into it, even as a private, in the spirit of a great adventure. I see no glory in it now,—nothing but horror. I believe I will never get over killing those brave fellows at Mons. For the time being I was a wild beast."

"For the time being you were superman!" he exclaimed proudly. "I heard all about it from an eyewitness, and he said you were wonderful. He had never seen your like. If anybody ought to like war, you ought, for your regiment idolizes you, and—"

But I stopped him. I could n't stand for it. Harold was always a hero-worshipper, and if he could n't do any better, he 'd make a hero even out of me.

"Oh, drop it, Harold! Anybody 'd think your wound had gone to your brain," I exclaimed irritably.

"Look here, old Hugh," said Harold gently, "do you

know what 's the matter with you? You 've gone stale. You 've been fighting and retreating, fighting and retreating, and that will take the heart out of any man. You get a nice little wound now, nothing to speak of, just enough to lay you up comfortably in hospital for awhile, like me, and you'll feel perfectly fit. Why, man, I 'm crazy to get back into the thick of it!"

"And I 'm crazy to be out of it, that is, to have it all ended, for I will never leave till the last gun 's fired. I don't want it ended, either, till the whole thing is settled in the right way, till we 've fixed things so there can never be another war while the world stands!"

"And yet there are some good things about war," said Harold thoughtfully. "It makes men of some chaps in a way that nothing else could; it brings out the best that 's in them."

"True enough! Some of the best things Bernhardt said were along that line. 'Peace and prosperity develop selfishness and a love of material things; war brings out the spirit of self-sacrifice, of heroic willingness to die for a lofty ideal.' I 've seen it exemplified, too. Fitzmaurice had n't a thought above wine and cards, his hunters and his dogs; now he 's all ablaze with righteous zeal and bearing every kind of hardship in the jolliest spirit. He 's been a lesson to me. Then I had a little London cockney for a mate when I was a ranker; he was another lesson. He was patient, willing, cheerful, jolly in the midst of all kinds of privations, and all the time had a little wife at home that he loved as, please God, you and I will love our wives some day, Harold. It was the sight of him dying a horrible death

at my feet that drove me wild that first terrible day at Mons."

"But he's not dead, Hugh. He's here, in the hospital, pretty badly off but as lively as a cricket."

"Bill Bradley? Here? Are you *sure*! How do you know?"

"How do I know? Because my little nurse yonder is always telling me about him. He's the life of the ward, and he's everlastingly singing your praises."

My talk with Harold had done me good. No doubt, as he said, I was stale and depressed by constant retreat. Certainly there is nothing exhilarating or inspiring in retreating day by day before a foe who you are obliged to acknowledge is outfighting you. But this last bit of news went far toward lifting the cloud that had hung over my spirits. Next to finding Harold doing well was the joy of knowing that Bill Bradley was alive and likely to recover.

As soon as my time with Harold was up I went to look for Bill Bradley, and Harold's little nurse was only too proud and glad to take me to him. His honest face was shining with joy when I came to his bedside.

"An' it's Capen Hatfield, is it? I sy, it's a bloomin' shame," were his first words, and I was rather taken aback.

"Shame, Bill? Are you ashamed to own me as your captain?"

"It's a bloomin' shame that it isn't a colonel of a regiment, or mebbe a general. It would be, if I had my wy."

I told him it was more honor than I deserved to be

captain of such brave boys. There were only thirty of the old company left, and the remnants of two other captainless companies had been added to it. His eyes kindled as I told him of that stubborn three days' fight and the bitterly contested retreat. It was easy to see, even if he had not said so over and over, that he was impatient to be back in it. He called me "captain" every other word—he seemed to like the sound of it—and his last words were:

"Please God, I 'll be back in the old company yet, an' fightin' under the bravest capen in the corps, Capen Hatfield."

But he never came back; he was too badly disabled. Instead he received an honorable discharge and went home to his little wife, where months later I found him, still jolly, struggling to make a living for the little wife and a baby, now, with one sleeve empty.

And once again I saw his eyes kindle with the ardor of battle at sight of his "Capen."

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE ANGEL OF THE AMBULANCE

**B**UT the dismal days of retreat were over. There came word from General Joffre—"The time has come to take the offensive,"—and gaily we turned and drove them back; across the Marne, back, back to the Aisne, where for twenty-three days we fought the longest battle in history, the Battle of the Aisne and the Marne.

It was terrible fighting. There were charges and counter-charges, victories and defeats. British and French and Germans lay dead by thousands on the fair fields of northern France, but at last the Germans were driven permanently across the Marne, and Paris was safe.

It was in mid-September and the great battle was at its height when I had my wonderful surprise. I had often noted the bravery of the Red Cross, both men and women, daring death for themselves to rescue the wounded, but never before had I seen anything like the sight I beheld on that September day when the fighting was hotter than on any day during that long battle.

My men had been engaged steadily without rest or food for thirteen hours, and those who were not killed or wounded were plainly exhausted. I was temporarily in command of the regiment—the colonel had been



wounded the day before and Harold, who was back at his post, had been despatched on some special service—and I had just sent word to the staff asking relief for my exhausted men if possible. The cyclist had barely set off with his message when a new shrapnel and shell fire, heavier than anything that had preceded it, burst forth on our right, evidently from fresh batteries that had just come up.

Into this hail of fire and death drove a Red Cross field-ambulance. I did not at first notice that the driver was a woman; she was khaki-clad and wore a man's cap, and at a little distance no one would have suspected she was not a man. I had never seen any man as cool. She drove her car into the heart of the firing, where the wounded lay thickest, and at her command her helpers, stalwart men shrinking and dodging, but not daring or ashamed to disobey, swiftly lifted the wounded into the car. Only when her ambulance would hold no more did she drive away. But as soon as she had deposited her burden in the field hospital behind the lines, she was back again, as coolly as before, ordering and directing her men.

It was not until she returned for the third time that I discovered that she was a girl. The firing was at its hottest, and I was irritated that a woman should so expose herself, and rode up to the field-ambulance to order it back of the lines. Time enough for this rescue work when the firing should cease at sundown, as it was sure to do.

"Take your ambulance back of the lines!" I ordered roughly, and stopped, aghast. I was looking into Bea-



"Begging your pardon, Captain Hatfield, I refuse to obey orders"



trice's merry brown eyes, and it was Beatrice's saucy voice that answered:

"Begging your pardon, Captain Hatfield, I refuse to obey orders," and calmly ignoring me, she went on with her work.

At that I grew frantic. It was bad enough to have any woman thus exposed, but Beatrice! Great God!

I could not stay away from my post. I must ride back instantly, but I made one desperate appeal.

"Beatrice, for the love of Heaven, for the love of all you hold dear, for the love of him you hold dearest, go back! Go back and stay until the firing is over. For my sake! I implore you!"

She looked at me gently, but shook her head.

"I can't, Hugh," she said simply.

I felt it was useless to either command or entreat, and I knew I must be off.

"Where can I see you to-night?" I asked hurriedly.

She gave me the number of her field-hospital, and I rode away, joy and fear, despair and hope, surging in a mighty tumult through my veins.

At last there was an interval of rest. Night dropped its friendly curtain and my exhausted men, fighting since the earliest dawn, a long fifteen hours, dropped in their places, while commissaries brought them hot soup that gave them strength to drag themselves back to bivouac and more substantial rations.

As soon as I had seen that they were being cared for, I stole away to hunt for Field Hospital Number 10. But I might have known I would not find Beatrice at leisure; the night was the time for Red Cross work.

She was just starting out again for the battle-field when I rode up. I gave my horse to the orderly who had accompanied me, and without asking leave sprang into the car beside her.

"How dare you, Captain Hatfield!" she demanded, yet, as I could easily see, she felt herself powerless, and perhaps not greatly desiring to object strenuously.

"I dare much where you are concerned," I answered briefly. "Are you ready? Drive on."

She started her car.

"Now I want to know many things, and my time is brief. Tell me everything as quickly as you can," I began, when we were well under way. "How, and when, and why, did you leave Germany? How do you happen to be in the Red Cross? And above all, how do you happen to be driving this great field-ambulance? This is man's work."

She began with what I wanted to know most—how she and Miss Martin happened to leave Germany.

"We were not long behind you, only about ten days. Miss Martin began to grow restless, anxious to get out of Germany. I had kept my promise. I had stayed until Baron von Dreidorf left for the front, and I, too, was restless and eager to be away."

How I longed to know what decision she had made concerning the baron. But of course I did not dare ask, though the very fact that she was here, that she had not remained in Germany, gave me hope. I did not dare question her about the baron—instead I asked:

"Did n't you have difficulties? How did you manage to get away?"

"No, it was all a great adventure; even Miss Martin

enjoyed it. There was quite a large party of us, all Americans, and we chartered a car. In some respects I never had a more pleasant trip. The German officials could not show us enough courtesy. A delegation of them was at the train in Berlin to see us off, with flowers and printed addresses of farewell, begging us to explain to their friends in America the justice of their cause. Our whole route, until we reached Switzerland, was like a triumphal procession—delegations bringing us flowers and fruit, and printed addresses at every station.”

“So you came through Switzerland? I wondered how you got through the lines.”

“Yes. We had to give up our car at the frontier, of course,—it must go back to Germany to be used for troops,—and we had a little trouble in securing new accommodations, though not a great deal; but once we were on the through train for Paris we were all right.”

“And how about the Red Cross? How did you happen to go into that?”

“I did n’t ‘happen.’ I left Germany with the determination to be a nurse in the British Red Cross. But they would n’t take me. I had had no training, and the lives of their wounded soldiers were too precious to be intrusted to ignorant hands. Then Miss Martin, who was as determined as I to do something for ‘the cause,’ decided to buy a field-ambulance and present it to the British Red Cross, and I begged her to let me drive it. Of course she was unwilling at first, but I persuaded her that I would be wretched, if I could do nothing, and since I had no money to buy field-ambulances I ought to be allowed to do what little I could. She saw the justice of my plea, but I’m afraid she’s not very happy,

poor lady, in her quarters at St. Quentin, snatching every opportunity, when she can commandeer a car or a vehicle of any kind, to ride over to the field-hospital."

"Happy? I should think not!" I blustered. "I should not have been so soft-hearted. This is no work for a girl like you."

But she stopped me with a quiet word.

"Hugh," she said, "I don't like to hear you speak in that way. A girl like me should do what little she can at such an awful time. Oh, Hugh, it's terrible! Sometimes I think it will not end until the whole world is destroyed."

By this time we were nearing the battle-field, and Beatrice slowed down the car, picking her way carefully lest she run over some poor fellow, dead or dying. I was amazed at the cleverness of her driving and asked her where she had learned it. "At home," she told me briefly; "American girls do everything, you know."

I believed they did. And then we came upon a little group of wounded, lying on top of one another in a heap. Her car stopped, and her four helpers sprang out, I with them, and I had my first lesson in handling wounded men so as to hurt them as little as possible. To me was delegated the task of helping into the ambulance such of the wounded as were partially able to aid themselves, while the four men lifted the helpless ones.

It was weird work by the light from an old moon, just rising, and it was made more ghastly by the moans and groans and occasional shrieks that rose on all sides of us. One poor fellow was bellowing at the top of his lungs. When I said to Beatrice that it sounded to me like an unmanly performance,—why could n't he bear

his suffering with the grim endurance of most of these others!—she told me that the poor chap did n't know what he was doing, he was delirious from pain, which probably was fortunate for him, as, no doubt, he would otherwise be suffering agonies.

We filled our car almost beyond capacity, and it was pitiful to hear those we could not take begging not to be left behind. Beatrice's sweet voice always seemed to soothe them. "We 're coming right back for you," she would say to them, "and I 'm leaving some one to help you; call on them for anything you want."

Two of her men were left behind. There was much they could do to give first aid, binding up bleeding wounds that threatened hemorrhages, giving water to the faint or brandy to those whose sinking pulse needed stimulating, and administering hypodermics to those whose pain was intolerable.

"The men calls her the 'Angel of the Ambulance,' " a poor devil of a ranker, not so badly wounded but that he could sit on the seat beside me and be supported by my arm, whispered in my ear. "They say as 'ow she knows 'ow to drive 'er car so 's never to give you a jolt, if you 're 'urt bad. I was always 'opin' when my time come, it would be 'er as got me, an' sure enough!"

I had little opportunity to say anything to Beatrice during that homeward drive, though I sat next her, with the wounded ranker on the outside. But I could watch her earnest face, pale and chiseled in the moonlight that every moment grew brighter. So intent was she to avoid every rough spot in the road that she did not know she was being watched, and I could think many thoughts about her.



So she was famous with the men. Already she had won a reputation for carefulness and tenderness, who was I to interfere with her Heaven-ordained work? Once I said to her, very low in her ear, while the half-suppressed moans of the men behind us shut off our voices from any listener:

"Beatrice, dearest, I am not going to protest any more. You were made for this work; it would be wicked to interfere with it; only, for *my* sake, do not go out on the firing line. Wait until the firing is over in the evening."

She did not answer for a moment, but I felt she was greatly moved. Presently she looked up at me and spoke with a wonderful look in her brown eyes, but not a hint of yielding:

"I must, Hugh." I almost thought she was going to add "dearest," for she hesitated a moment, then she went on: "*You* are on the firing line every day, because your duty calls you there. My duty calls me there, too. And besides, what if *you* should be among the wounded some day, Hugh?"

I could not answer her. Her voice was full of such tenderness that it set my pulses beating wildly. I could only bend my head and touch my lips to the little hand that held the steering wheel so firmly.

I hoped that no one saw my little act. The wounded men on their cots behind us were engrossed with their own anguish, and the two helpers were busy ministering to their relief. But there came a low chuckle from the ranker on my right.

"I sy, Capen!" he whispered. "The 'angel' ain't your woman, is she? Or your sweetheart, mebbe? You 're a lucky un!"

## CHAPTER XXIII

### I MEET AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE ON THE BATTLE-FIELD

**N**O, the "angel" was not my "woman," though I thrilled at the sound of the ranker's homely word. I could not even be sure she was my sweetheart, or that she would confess to being such.

I saw her but twice after that ride on the ambulance, and the first time I attempted to speak to her of love. But she stopped me quickly.

"Hugh," she said earnestly, "this is no time to talk of love, or even to think of it. You and I each have our work to do; until this war is over let us think of nothing but our work."

"And when it is over?" I persisted.

She hesitated, and I could see the color rising slowly in her sun-browned cheek. Then she said slowly, laying her hand in mine with simple friendliness as she spoke:

"When this awful war is over there may be no marrying or giving in marriage; neither you nor I may be among the living. And if we are, all earthly conditions may be so changed that the thought of marriage may not be possible. Until then, Hugh, we will never speak of this again."

She gave my hand a little friendly pressure and gently drew hers away. I could not speak for a moment. Something in the solemnity of her tone had brought

before me the woe, the horror, the awfulness of this World War with a vividness that was like a lightning flash of prophecy. I did not think of myself, but where would she be when the war was over? Among the living? There hardly seemed hope of it, if she were to continue her daring methods of rescue.

It was three days later that I saw her for the last time, and it was on the same evening that I had my second wonderful surprise.

It had been another day of terrific fighting—but then, every day was that—and when sundown brought an interval of peace I went up to Field Hospital Number 10. I was terribly tired. This prolonged battle, fighting day after day with no intervals of rest except the brief hours of the night—and not always then—was beginning to tell on officers and men. There was nothing I so longed to do as to lie down and spend twenty-four hours in dreamless, undisturbed slumber. Nothing, that is, except to see Beatrice. I had a feeling that I *must* see her that evening, and as I look back now, it seems to me that my feeling was in the nature of a premonition.

It was my luck, I said to myself when I arrived at the hospital, to find that Beatrice had not returned from the battle-field. I would wait for her; and, in the meantime, I would take advantage of the interval to visit some of my wounded men in the hospital.

I was walking slowly through the ward, stopping at one cot and another for a few minutes of friendly chat wherever I saw a familiar face—and at some cots where the faces were not familiar—when I was startled by a ringing call in French:

"Hugh, old comrade! Where did you come from?"

I turned quickly. On the cot behind me lay Marcel, his face alight with joy and surprise and his unwounded hand stretched eagerly toward me.

"Where did *you* come from?" I echoed, grasping his hand with both of mine. I have no doubt that my face, too, was aglow with joyful surprise.

I had thought much of Marcel since coming to France, and had hoped that before long a time might come when I would dare to take a leave of absence and hunt him up. But I had not written him. I was never good at writing letters and the little time at my disposal had been devoted to brief notes to my father. Now, as I repeated the question "How do you happen to be in an English hospital?" he told me that he was aide to General Joffre and had been sent with a note to General French.

"They got me," he smiled, "but I delivered my note all right. And who do you suppose picked me up and brought me here?" he asked, as if he expected to astound me.

I thought I knew—"Miss Ludlow, I suppose."

"So you knew she was in the Red Cross? And you've come here to see her?" He spoke quickly, pleased with the keenness of his inductions.

I had taken a camp-stool to his bedside and was sitting beside him, still holding his hand. I only smiled an answer to both his questions.

"Do you know what the men call her?" he asked eagerly.

I nodded.

"Well, she is an angel, and a daredevil to boot. If I were n't so much in love with Thérèse Feronce, I'd be

in love with her myself. You 're a lucky chap, Hugh."

It would not do to let Marcel deceive himself about our relations.

"Not at all," I said. "The more of an angel she, the more unlucky I. Miss Ludlow is still mistress of her affections."

"Oh, well, she won't be for long. No one could resist such a good looking captain." He smiled with easy confidence as he spoke.

I did not feel his confidence and changed the topic. I wanted to know if he was badly hurt. Not badly, he declared; the nurses said he would be about in a week or two.

I sat beside him for half an hour before Beatrice returned, and there was not much we did not talk of in that half hour—recalling our adventures together and our adventures since we said good-by on the borders of Belgium. In every word he said I was touched by the strength and the tenderness of his feeling for me. It seemed wonderful to me that, simply because I had not turned against him when I discovered he was a spy, and because I had insisted on accompanying him in his flight, he should feel such unbounded gratitude as he professed.

I had left word for Beatrice that I wanted to see her, and where I would be found. At the end of the half hour I saw her coming through the ward, looking more beautiful in her natty, khaki dress, still neat despite its hard usage, and a little cap set jauntily on her brown curls, than she had looked in evening dress in Leipzig or Rome.

She was smiling a greeting to each cot as she passed, stopping for a word with some and waving a cheery

greeting to others, and the men responded each in his own fashion. Some smiled in return, some waved a feeble hand, one man lifted himself on his elbow and threw her a kiss, and one poor fellow, far gone, as any one could see, raised a faint cheer: "What 's the matter with the Angel? *She 's* all right. Hip, hip hurrah!" It was a true American salute and and touched Beatrice deeply. She stopped at the man's cot, knelt by his side a moment and said something to him, too low for any of us to hear, but we could see his ecstatic smile in response.

"*C'est une veritable fille du regiment,*" Marcel murmured. "And how the men adore her!" He turned quickly to me. "And how you adore her, Hugh! You are simply devouring her with those glowing eyes of yours."

I laughed foolishly and turned away from Beatrice.

"Nonsense, Marcel!" I spluttered. "You 've a sick man's fancy."

Just then Beatrice came up and we chatted together for a few minutes of old Leipzig days.

"No doubt both the Fräuleins Bernhof are 'war-brides,' " said Marcel. "Fräulein Elsa, I 'm sure would find no good reason for refusing Herr Geheimrath von Blarcom. She would enjoy the title of 'Frau Geheimrath' immensely."

"That 's the first ill-natured speech I 've ever heard you make about anyone, Marcel," I declared.

"Not at all ill-natured," he protested, and little did either of us dream that within the next forty-eight hours I would be able to verify his prophecy.

But Beatrice could not linger. She must return to

the battle-field at once, she said. The harvest of dead and wounded had been unusually heavy that day, and the ambulance would be at work most of the night. She had only stolen these few minutes while they were removing the wounded from her ambulance and must return immediately.

Of course I said I would go with her, and of course she protested; but I had my way. As I bent over Marcel to say good-by to him, he put up his one well arm and drew my head down, kissing me on both cheeks.

"Good-by, dear friend," he whispered. "Good-by, dearest Hugh."

I drew myself up hastily, scarlet, I could feel, from ear to ear, that Beatrice should be witness to his French demonstrativeness.

"Oh, it's not good-by, Marcel," I said easily. "I shall see you often as long as you remain here."

But it was good-by, and for many long months.

I made two trips with Beatrice and I think I was not a hindrance, but rather some help to her. And though the task was a grewsome one, and there were many heart-rending sights and sounds, I got some moments of exquisite delight out of the night's work, moments in whose memory I lived for weeks.

To watch her bending over those poor, dying wretches, her earnest face pale in the flare from her tiny electric flash, soothing their last moments as a mother might, was a sight never to be forgotten. At times it almost seemed to me as if she was giving them absolution, and I believe the poor fellows felt as if she were, so calm and peaceful did their dying faces become where be-

fore there had been only agony and despair. She said to me, while we were on our second homeward trip:

"One could not live through such scenes, Hugh, if one did not have faith in God."

She said this so simply that I was startled. I do not know why it should be startling to hear one speak of God and our faith in Him—for most of us have it hidden away somewhere—but it is. I did not remember that I had ever before heard such words from the lips of a young and beautiful woman. I was embarrassed for a reply, and she seemed to expect one. I answered her according to the thought that was often uppermost in my own mind.

"Don't you think such scenes rather tend to shake one's faith in God? How could a good God, if he has any control over the minds and hearts of men, allow his world and his creatures to get into such an awful cataclysm of crime and suffering?"

"I do not know; I cannot tell. But I think we can often judge best by analogy. We are God's children, and sometimes an earthly father has to let his wilfully disobedient children go their own way blindly, reaping the fruits of their misdoing. But God is greater than any earthly father, and I firmly believe He can bring good out of evil. I can see a little of the good in the spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice that these men of the most ordinary type exhibit. I carry a little notebook with me, and while my men are caring for the wounded and getting them into the ambulance, I am taking down the last messages of the dying and the home addresses of friends to whom to send them. There is not one who does not breathe some noble sentiment of



self-abnegating love, some faith in the ultimate good, that any man might be proud to utter. But that is not quite what I mean. I mean something broader, more universal, than that. One evil that I believe will be largely done away with is the absinthe-drinking of the French, the vodka-drinking of the Russians, and the rum-drinking of your own people."

"That in itself would be an incalculable good," I said. "I wish I could believe it will result."

"I believe it will," she declared firmly. "But that is not all. That would be a great good, but it is a lesser good. If I did not believe that when this war is over, when all its claims are finally adjusted, hate will give place to love, enmity among peoples to the brotherhood of nations, and that peace will be established on such broad lines and on so firm a basis that no shock of contending forces can ever again disturb it; that, as this is a World War, so that will be a World Peace; if I did not believe all this, then I could not endure the sights and sounds I daily have to witness."

It is impossible to describe the ardor and yet the gentleness with which this was said. The interior of the ambulance was lighted dimly, that there might be no delay in administering first aid to the injured, and by that light I could see the glow of ardent faith in her dark eyes, the rapt expression on her beautiful face. It was the face of an angel, and for a moment I was silenced into something like awe. Was this, then, one of the good effects of war: to turn a frivolous society girl, for Beatrice had appeared little different to other society girls in Rome and Berlin, into an earnest, noble-minded woman?

"You believe, then, that war is not an unmitigated evil?" I asked, when I found my tongue.

"I believe it to be an unmitigated evil," she answered, "but I believe God knows how, and will mitigate the evil."

"Beatrice," I said abruptly, "do you know that you are the first young woman who ever talked to me of God?"

Even in the dim light I could see a bright blush instantly answer my speech, and I was sorry I had spoken. I was afraid she was annoyed, but she gave me no chance to apologize.

"I know it's unusual, Hugh," she said shyly, and still with that heightened color, "but doesn't it sometimes seem strange to you that we never talk of Him? There is not one of us but has many thoughts of Him, and we never utter any of them. The Catholics do not hesitate to speak of their religion and their faith; the Buddhists and the Confucians talk it freely and live it every moment; it is only we Protestant Christians who are ashamed of our religion. Not," she added quickly, "that I think we ought to talk lightly of such matters before people who are indifferent, any more than we speak of our love for our family and our friends before people who care neither for us nor for them. But among friends like you and me, don't you think it's a little—foolish—Hugh—that we never speak of such things?"

The adorable shyness and hesitation with which she uttered these last words were almost too much for me. I wanted to take her in my arms then and there, but of course I could not.

How often I saw her in my dreams as I saw her that

last time! And how often I heard again her sweet voice and her faltering words in the weeks and months that followed! It was a girlish profession of faith and very youthful, no doubt, but to me it was adorable, though Beatrice could have said or done nothing throughout that wonderful night which would not have seemed adorable to me in the doing and the saying.

The next morning was like the morning of the battle of Mons. We were roused from sleep at early dawn by the spitting of sentinels' rifles. Above, the sky was still a velvet black, with golden points of stars pricking through, but the silver lantern of the morning star was blazing in splendor above a faint line of light in the east. I was once more temporarily in command of my regiment, and my men were holding outposts along the crest of a wooded ridge. The splatter of the sentries' rifles roused every man to arms, and kneeling in their places, just where they were roused from sleep, with every man's finger on the trigger of his rifle, I only waited for the sentries to run back to our line before giving the command "Fire!"

At the word there was a flash of light along the line and a deafening clatter. Behind us we could hear the reserves rushing up at the sound of our guns, and our artillery limbering up for action. The stars were beginning to pale, a faint, diffused light spread over the black vault above us from the slowly brightening east, and through it we could vaguely see black masses moving toward us, and, charging up the crest, came a long, undulating line of ghostly Uhlans.

Our flash of fire had been the signal for the enemy's artillery to open fire upon us, and all around us fell the

deadly hail of shrapnel, with the horrid shriek and roar of bursting shells. We were only an outpost, only expected to hold our position and delay the enemy until the main body could get into action. This was an attack in force. It would be foolish to try to hold out against it, and I gave the order to fire two more volleys into the advancing Uhlans and then withdraw to the main line. But I never knew how my orders were carried out. I heard the first volley, but almost at the same moment was struck by shrapnel and fell.

I must have been struck senseless, but only for a few moments. As consciousness slowly returned, I heard the thunder of hoofs over my head, the war-shout of the Uhlans, the cries of men, the horrible shrieks of dying horses, and then the battle swept beyond me down the slope.

I suppose I lapsed into semi-unconsciousness again, and through my dazed senses heard some one uttering shrieks of pain and loud cries for water in that same unmanly fashion that I had found fault with to Beatrice on that first evening with her in her ambulance, cries that she had excused on the plea that the poor fellow was delirious and knew not what he was doing.

I roused myself to rebuke the fellow and bid him bear his pain like a man. He was one of my command, I had a right to rebuke him. But as I came back to full consciousness I no longer heard his shrieks and cries. All was still about me, except an occasional half-suppressed groan or a low moan.

In a hazy kind of way I was glad the fellow was controlling himself. The sun was just rising, blinking at me over the top of a wooded crest to the east, and I was

glad to sink into unconsciousness again as a relief from my intolerable pain and thirst. Yet no sooner had I fallen into that blessed oblivion than the shrieks and cries were redoubled. I lost all patience that the fellow would not let me rest.

Then I was roused a second time by a faint voice near me.

"Comrade," it said in German, "have a drink from my canteen."

I turned and looked dully at the man. He was a German officer, and lying so close to me that almost without effort I could extend my hand for the canteen he held toward me. I half-drained it before I realized that I must leave some water for him. The water had a wonderfully revivifying effect, and I thanked him warmly. Then I said, by way of conversation:

"Have you heard that foolish fellow crying and bawling like a baby? I wonder what has become of him?"

The man smiled queerly.

"The only crying and bawling I have heard came from you, Herr Hatfield," he said.

I turned and looked at him sharply. Who was this German officer who knew my name?

"Herr Geheimrath von Blarcom!" I exclaimed, and then was covered with confusion.

"Do you mean to say it was *I* who was making such an ass of myself with those unearthly yells? I beg you to kill me at once, Herr Geheimrath, and have done with it. I do not deserve to live."

"No," said the German, still with his queer smile. "You were delirious, and not responsible. But you

must be suffering intolerable agony, and I have something here that will relieve you."

With that he offered me a hypodermic syringe from his little kit of first-aid remedies, and with his fast failing strength thrust the needle into my arm.

"But you will need it yourself," I protested.

"No," he said quietly, "I do not need it." And then he added quickly, as if he feared his strength might not last for the telling:

"If you get to Germany, Herr Hatfield, send some word to my wife—she was Fräulein Elsa, you know—that my last thoughts were of her and of the little unborn babe who, I hope, will some day be a brave soldier to fight for the Fatherland."

"But, Herr Geheimrath," I stammered, "you will recover. The Red Cross will soon be here, and you will have the help you need."

"I fear—the Red Cross—will be too late," he said softly and hesitatingly, and closed his eyes.

I could not tell whether he was sleeping, fainting, or dying, and I did not like to disturb him. And very soon the kindly morphine began to take effect and I sank into glorious dreams of Beatrice.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### CRUSHED

**A**S my dreams slowly gave way to returning consciousness, I experienced the pleasant sensation of being soothed and rocked by some gentle motion. But as consciousness became more vivid, many disagreeable sensations succeeded that first pleasant one: nauseous odors, close and fetid air, half-smothered groans and curses, and the old intolerable pain and thirst.

It did not take me long to discover that I was lying on the unclean straw of a cattle-car with half a hundred or more of my compatriots. All of us were too severely wounded to sit upright, and we were literally packed, like sardines in a box, with no room to turn over, even had we been able to do so. We were about as uncomfortable as human beings well could be, but there was nothing for it except to endure grimly as best we could.

Thanks to the kindly morphine of the Herr Geheimrath I had passed the greater part of that wretched journey oblivious to its discomforts, and it was not many hours before we were hustled from the train into a hospital. I say hustled, but I've no doubt our treatment was as gentle as we could expect from the hands of aliens. Once lying on a clean cot in a cool and airy hospital-ward, I, for one, felt that the worst of my troubles were over, and I was quite willing to forgive

the rough handling I had received in my transit from train to hospital.

But they were not over. I could tell this as soon as I looked into the eyes of the kind-faced surgeon, after he had made careful examination of my wounds.

"So, so, *mein Freund*," he said in his homely guttural, "I fear this means that you lose your arm."

Such a horrible contingency had never occurred to me. I knew that I suffered intolerable pain in that arm, worse than from the wound in my side which seemed to me ought to be more serious, but it had not entered my head that the bone was shattered beyond all healing. Nor did I believe it now. I was sure that one of our own surgeons could find a way to set the bone and save my arm. So I glared up at the surgeon.

"You shall never take that arm off with my consent!" I declared.

"Ach, so; there, there, my friend," he purred, with the evident intention of soothing my anger. "Better to lose your arm than your life, *nicht wahr?*"

"No! I'll take a chance. Better to lose my life than to go through life a helpless cripple."

The good surgeon looked puzzled. "Ach, so," he murmured several times, and then his brow cleared.

"Ah well," he said, "we will allow you time to think about it, and meanwhile we will give you something to relieve the pain."

Whereupon he produced one of those little syringes I was beginning to look upon with great favor, and I sank into sweet, untroubled rest without a hint of suspicion or distrust.

I say sweet and untroubled, for it was so at first. I



had the same delightful dreams of Beatrice that had come to me before with the blessed morphine. But there came a time when I was vaguely conscious of trouble of some kind, of desperate struggles. Then all was blank; I dropped out of existence as completely as if I were dead, though why, I should say that I do not know. Who can tell to what vivid experiences and sensations death may prove the open gate?

How long this blank lasted I do not know. As impressions began to form cloudily in my brain, I thought I recognized a familiar face hovering over me, wearing a smile, but with more of pity than of cheer, in the frank blue eyes. I was not sure that this was not one of my dreams and to clear my clouded vision I rubbed my eyes with my unwounded hand, for the other arm was still painful, though the agony was less intense than it had been.

"Why, Fräulein Marta!" I exclaimed in a voice whose weak falsetto I did not recognize as my own. "Where did you come from?"

Her smile cleared to one of entire good cheer.

"I'm a Red Cross nurse," she answered, "and by some lottery of fate you have fallen to me to take care of."

"Lucky fellow!" I murmured, and dozed off again for a few minutes. Then I roused myself once more.

"And where is Fräulein Elsa?" I asked. "Is she in the Red Cross, too?"

Of course I knew differently, but I felt too weak to tell Fräulein Marta the truth about the Herr Geheimrath, and I was hazily inventing pretexts for delay.

"Oh, Elsa?" she answered brightly. "Elsa is the Frau Geheimrath von Blarcom. They were a little in love with each other, you know, when you were in Leipzig."

"Yes, I know," I murmured drowsily. "And you? I thought every young woman in Germany was a war-bride."

"Not I!" she answered with a haughty toss of her head, and the expression of pride on her round, good-humored face was funny to see. "There was a man who wanted to marry me, but I did not love him and I did not believe he loved me. I was not going to be a *war-bride*, so I ran away to the Red Cross."

She looked about her hastily, and then bent low to my ear.

"That is the one thing I cannot forgive the Kaiser," she whispered; "this making unwilling brides by the wholesale."

Lése-majesté!

"But are they unwilling?" I asked in some astonishment. "I supposed they were glad to get married."

"Not all of them," she answered hurriedly. "Elsa and the Herr Geheimrath were very much in love with each other. But forty 'brides' stood up with Elsa in the Thomas-Kirche, married by one ceremony; and of the forty, fully half went like martyrs to the stake."

Then briefly and haltingly, as my strength permitted, but growing stronger with the recital, I told her of my meeting with the Herr Geheimrath, of his kindness to me, and of his last messages to his wife. Big, bright tears rolled unheeded down Fräulein Marta's round cheeks

as she listened. "Ach, so! Ach, poor Elsa!" she murmured over and over, and I echoed, "Poor Frau Elsa!" Later she said to me:

"I'm glad the Herr Geheimrath was so good to you; I used to think in Leipzig that he did not like you."

"I'm sure he did not. But war is like a fiery furnace. As the passion of hatred between nations flames higher and hotter, it burns out and purifies the mean and petty dislikes between individuals."

During the time I had been talking to Fräulein Marta my brain had been growing steadily clearer. Why was it that my arm, though still painful, felt comparatively comfortable? What had they done to it? I glanced down, and in that moment was frozen to marble.

*There was no arm there!* Instead there was something swathed hugely in bandages. That was the stump of my arm, I supposed, and I turned deadly faint at the thought.

Never in my life had I experienced the keenness of the anguish of that moment. Never again, I believe, can anything that affects myself alone cause me such agony. A mutilated creature no longer fit for service to his country! Then, in a flash, came the recollection of General Pau and his brilliant career of one-armed service. Yes, I might still be able to serve my country, but—and here lay the poignant anguish of that bitter moment—*I could never ask Beatrice to marry me.* What man would be so dastardly as to make capital out of the divine pity of a woman, to force his mutilation upon her peerless perfection!

But in a moment my anguish flamed into wrath. I had been basely deceived and betrayed. They had ad-

ministered morphine so that they might give me an anesthetic and perform the operation without my knowledge. This amputation had not been necessary, but they were glad of a pretext to send back mutilated soldiers to England. I raved, I cursed my captors as mutilators of men, and myself as an imbecile for having trusted them. Nurses and doctors rushed to my cot from all sides, and first by gentle, and then by severer means tried to quiet me. At last the hypodermic needle was produced—that little instrument I had once called blessed, but now regarded as hateful—and despite my desperate struggles, threatening to tear open my wounds afresh, the soothing fluid was injected and, bitterly against my will, I gradually sank into deep slumber.

When I awoke, after hours of uneasy sleep, it was no longer to raving and cursing but to a sullen apathy from which neither Fräulein Marta's pitying smiles nor the good surgeon's kindly "Ach, wohls" could rouse me. I was not bearing my trouble in very manly fashion; I was acting like a spoiled child, like a baby crying for the moon and refusing to be comforted. Yes, I was no better than a foolish babe. In my heart I was perpetually crying out in inconsolable anguish for the radiant creature now forever beyond my reach.

It needed another shock to rouse me from this stupor of my soul. Fate soon sent it.

I had made a rapid recovery,—so the doctors said,—for such a severe wound, and with several hundred other more or less slightly wounded, was to be marched farther into the interior in a day or two, and thus clear the hospitals for the German wounded.

Although my recovery was quite remarkable, I was

not yet back to the "strength of ten," and I was resting on my cot one morning, thinking dully of Beatrice, Harold, my father, and Hatfield Abbey, when I heard the jingling of spurs and lifted my eyes to see a tall golden-haired officer striding down the ward and looking at the cots to right and left as he passed.

My heart stood still for a moment, then began to beat violently. In a minute he would pass and see me. I sat up in uncontrollable excitement and as he drew near, scarcely aware of what I was doing, called aloud in a burst of rapture: "Siegfried!"

He turned at my hail, stared at me coldly with no hint of recognition in his glance, and passed on.

Cold, weak, and trembling in every limb, I fell back on my cot and closed my eyes. The last earthly affection was crushed. This lopping off of a friend was almost worse than cutting off an arm. I had loved him so. He had seemed to love me. We had sworn *Bruderschaft*, and he had declared that neither Beatrice nor this hateful war should make any difference in our friendship.

From under my closed lids I felt one scalding tear press its way down my cheek. Horrified lest any one should have discovered my weakness, I hastily opened my eyes and glanced furtively around.

At the foot of my couch—evidently having followed close behind Siegfried—triumphantly leering at me with the malignancy of hate, stood Keltowitch!

## CHAPTER XXV

### AT THE SPRING OF THE THREE SISTERS

**K**ELTOWITCH hurled one poisonous dart before he passed on.

“Proved a fair-weather friend, did he? I could have told you long ago that the baron was not the man to endanger his chances of promotion by professing friendship for an Englishman!”

As I answered him only with a scowl as black as his own, he left me with a malicious sneer still curling his lips.

The rest of that day and all of the next I brooded heavily over Siegfried’s treachery—I called it. I had not expected any help from him, but neither had I expected to be cruelly ignored in this fashion.

I was fast sinking into a state of utter despondency when late in the afternoon, at an hour when nurses, doctors, and patients are all supposed to be resting quietly, I saw Siegfried enter the ward again. I would not look at him; I resolutely closed my eyes and turned away. I was roused by a harsh voice, evidently speaking in great anger, though the tones were low and guarded and the words were in English plentifully interlarded with oaths, part English, part German.

“So here you are! Damn you! I’ve been hunting for you for two weeks! Damn it! Beatrice sent me

word that you were wounded and a prisoner, and asked me to look you up."

At the word "Beatrice" I opened my eyes and looked up at him for the first time. For one fleeting moment there was such a look of affection and pity in his brilliant blue eyes, as said, plainer than any words: "I still love you, Hugh, and I am unutterably sorry to see you in such a plight."

Perhaps the glow in my own eyes was just as ardent, for, still in a voice of wrath plentifully sprinkled with curses, he bade me beware of the expression in my eyes or they would betray him. From that moment I listened with my best simulation of a dull and angry stare, while his voice rumbled on, harsh and angry:

"This is Eisenach. You are to leave for Erfurt tomorrow by way of the Thuringian Forest, and you are to march day and night. Do you know a spot called 'The Spring of the Three Sisters' about a third of the way to Gotha? It is a wonderful spring, gushing up plentifully between two rocks guarded by three tall pines, grown together in one trunk near the roots. If you remember it, close your eyes for a moment."

I remembered it well,—springing up like a fountain and rushing down the mountain-side in a foaming cascade. I had stopped Marcel's car for a moment on our midnight ride to get a drink from its icy waters, while Marcel had slept peacefully on. I closed my eyes now to indicate to Siegfried that I knew the spot.

"Behind the left-hand rock, under a little ledge," he went on, still with his pretense of anger, "you will find a bundle of necessities, if, by any chance, you should escape on that midnight march. This may be treason

to suggest an escape, and I do not advise it, you may perish in the attempt. But God help you if you fall into the hands of Keltowitch! He has charge of the guard, and I am very sure he intends to find some excuse for making way with you on the march. I do not know why he hates you so, unless it is on account of Beatrice."

Siegfried's "God pity you" had sounded like a curse. Now, as he turned away, he said quite loud and in German:

"Damn you! Don't expect any pity from me; it serves you right!" This I interpreted to mean: "God bless you! I pity you from my heart and I love you!"

I answered in kind, scowling angrily:

"Curse you! I return your feeling fourfold!" And once more I had a lightning-like glance of love and pity from his blue eyes.

Child's play? Cheap melodrama? Totally unnecessary? Not at all. I had instant proof that Siegfried's caution was well advised.

The only nurse left on guard in the ward at this quiet hour had been gradually drawing nearer during this brief conversation, and now, driven by overweening curiosity, she came to my cot and began to question me.

"What was the matter with the baron?"

"I don't know," I answered shortly, as if still surly from the effects of the baron's berating.

"Did you ever know him before?"

"Yes, when I was in Germany last spring."

"But I don't understand why he should have been so angry with you; his cursing was quite awful," she persisted.



"Fräulein," I said, looking up and smiling at her to win sympathy for my confidence, "perhaps you will understand when I tell you that we were both in love with the same young lady."

She smiled back, as if affairs of the heart were quite in her line, which I doubt, since she was neither young nor beautiful, but she answered gaily:

"I understand perfectly, *mein Herr*."

A half hour later I saw Keltowitch enter the ward and, feigning sleep, but with lids only partly closed, watched him guardedly. I saw the nurse stop him and saw the two in close conference for a few minutes. From an occasional glance and gesture in my direction I knew what she was telling him as well as if I had overheard her words. Yes, Siegfried's precautions were well taken and I was glad I had told the fräulein that the quarrel between the baron and me was due to rivalry in love. To Keltowitch the explanation would have the ring of truth and the baron's anger would seem plausible.

What a load had gone from my heart! Siegfried loved and cared for me. He had risked much in befriending me, for were it discovered that he had been conniving at the escape of a prisoner, he could be accused of treason. Of course it was because he intended to assist in my escape that he had refused to recognize me and treated me so cavalierly in the presence of witnesses.

And best of all, Beatrice had been thinking of me and working for me. To be sure it did not altogether make for happiness to learn that she felt so confident in her power over the baron that she could send him on a two weeks' hunt for me, though that the baron

had neglected his military duties to hunt me up I did not for one moment believe. But she had been willing to use that power for my sake, and I would not admit that the baron held a higher place in her affections than did I.

All my despondency had departed utterly. It was with difficulty that I maintained my sullen and despondent exterior when the heart within me was buoyant with such love and hope—love for the two friends whose affection had not failed me; hope that I yet might escape the clutches of Keltowitch.

For I was as convinced as the baron that Keltowitch intended me harm. I had feared it from the moment I opened my eyes to find him glowering down malignantly on me. My fear was confirmed when I heard that he was to have charge of our guard on the march, and I was more than ever convinced of it when Siegfried voiced my own suspicions.

The next morning in the early dawn, the air crisp with frost, the morning star, like a blazing jewel on the brow of beauty, pendant over the crest of the Horselberg, we were lined up for the march. We were of all nations—English, French, Russians, and Poles—and there was much good-natured chaffing and friendly good-bys in many languages to the Red Cross nurses.

Most of us were in high spirits. A fairly comfortable breakfast, the tingling air, and the release from the confinement of the hospital exhilarated the men like wine, but no man there was in such overflowing spirits as I. I trod on air, and for the first few miles was conscious of no physical weakness. I even forgot for the time that empty sleeve dangling at my side.

But by early noon, when a halt was ordered for rations and an hour's rest, I was glad enough to swallow in haste my coffee and sandwich of black bread, and lie on the ground during the remainder of the hour. I was dead tired and dropped asleep instantly. When I was roused to resume the march I was still so drowsy that I did not notice for awhile the change in my marching companion. But I was wide awake the moment I heard myself addressed by name.

"Don't you remember me, Mr. Hatfield?"

The tone was crisp, the words well clipped, the voice a strangely familiar one. I turned quickly.

"Mr. Witkowski!" I exclaimed, and grasped his hand in pure delight. I had always liked him. I had never expected to see him again. He had been not much more than an acquaintance, but he seemed to me now like an old and valued friend.

"I am sorry for your misfortune," he said after a few minutes of reminiscent talk, with a slight but significant glance at my empty sleeve. "It's the fortune of war, but I could wish you had been spared."

"There are many thousands of us, I suppose," I answered, my voice not quite steady, for I was not yet accustomed to sympathy. "There may be millions of us before this awful war is over. When I think of the armless and legless men who will fill Europe I am seized with futile rage at war and its horrors."

"Yes, it is terrible," said Witkowski with a dramatic shudder. "But some great good will come out of it, as sure as there's a God in Heaven!" he added fervently.

I was rather surprised at such a sentiment from the witty and cynical Witkowski, for hitherto I had seen

only that side of him, and I glanced at him curiously. My glance revealed what I had not noticed before, and what struck me now with horror.

"You, too!" was all I could utter, but I grasped his hand and held it tightly.

"Yes," he said with a twisted smile, "I also wear the empty sleeve."

"We 're comrades now in very truth," I said, still holding his hand and wondering if he had suffered the mental anguish over his mutilation that I had suffered over mine.

He did not answer for a moment. Then he looked up at me—he was a full half-head shorter—with a tremulous smile.

"We never swore *Bruderschaft*, Mr. Hatfield—shall we swear it now?"

And, there, walking hand in hand along that woodland road, the great mountains, a blaze of glory in their late October livery, towering above us, we swore *Bruderschaft* in the friendly German fashion.

Now, several times during the morning Keltowitch had ridden past me on the march, and had always stopped long enough to say something intensely disagreeable. I felt sure he was trying to rouse my anger in order to give himself the excuse for making way with me that Siegfried was so certain he would find. Having been forewarned, I had held myself under careful control. But when he continued the same tactics in the afternoon, and grew more and more insulting, my endurance began to wear thin. Witkowski could not understand why I put up with it, and at every repetition his own temper flamed higher and hotter. I had to cau-

tion him, at last, that this was the very result that Keltowitch was striving to achieve—to make me lost command of myself and say or do something that would give him the opportunity he desired. Witkowski promised to do his best to keep himself under control, but I did not altogether trust his quick temper, and my fears soon proved well-founded.

We stopped at the Three Sisters for supper, and I was on pins and needles every moment of our stay lest von Dreidorf's bundle of necessities should be discovered under the ledge of rock. I glanced in that direction myself as often as I dared, to learn if any tell-tale bit of the bundle was in sight, but either it had been already found and removed or the baron had hidden it too securely to be discovered by any casual glance.

Naturally my anxiety precluded all thought of rest, and when we were lined up again for the march I realized that I was dead tired and had been foolish to fritter away this hour in useless anxieties when I might have snatched a refreshing forty winks. Keltowitch took advantage of my look of pallor and weakness to goad me once more. We were standing in line, but the order to march had not been given, when he rode up and stopped his horse beside me.

"Mr. Hatfield looks pale," he said with his ugly leer. "His wound is troubling him, *nicht wahr?*"

With that he deliberately thrust the point of his sword into the still tender stump of my arm. It was nothing more than a pin-prick, but I was not prepared for it, and on a small scale and for a moment it was excruciating agony. Involuntarily I jumped and uttered an exclamation of pain. Keltowitch laughed aloud.

"So! I had heard the British were brave," he sneered.

This was too much for Witkowski. He drew back his fist and planted a resounding blow full on Keltowitch's sneering lips, a blow that came near to unseating him.

"Take that for hurting a wounded man, you damned coward!" he shouted.

But he had not finished speaking before Keltowitch recovered himself, raised his sword, and struck Witkowski a swinging blow on the head with the flat of it.

Witkowski dropped like a stone. I thought he was dead and so did Keltowitch. One of the guards started toward him.

"Let the dog lie!" snarled Keltowitch. "Forward, march!"

The long line moved forward helplessly, faces white with fear and sullen with futile anger, leaving Witkowski pale in death and alone beside the Three Sisters.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### I RECITE MY LESSON

**A**ND I? For one moment blind rage seized me and I came near springing at the throat of Keltowitch. It would have been his end I think, but saner judgment prevailed. To kill Keltowitch would be no aid to Witkowski, and it would surely mean my death. I would bide my time, slip out of the ranks, hurry back to the Three Sisters, and I might yet be in time to help him.

It was dusk when we took up our march again, and since it was late in October, night fell rapidly. We were traversing a mountain gorge and there was no moon. The night promised to be one of inky blackness, and I was glad of it, for it would be an easy matter to slip out of line in the darkness without discovery.

But I rejoiced too soon. It had hardly grown dark before every guard turned on the light of an electric lantern. These were like small search-lights, so powerful were the reflectors behind them, and the guards, riding at intervals of fifty feet, kept them constantly playing over the lines.

For awhile I gave up all hope of escape, and I might have resigned myself to my fate had it not been for the thought of Witkowski. I could not leave him to his fate, he had risked his life for me, and I set to work to find a way to evade those dazzling lights.

It did not take me long to note that there was an appreciable interval of perhaps three minutes between each successive blinding of my eyes by the lanterns' rays. Moreover, I saw that, by good fortune, I was stationed almost exactly midway between two guards. I was twenty-five feet from the nearest one. When I had noted these two facts my plan was quickly made.

"If I should fall over some precipice at a narrow part of the road, raise no hue and cry; for it will not be by accident," I whispered to the two men nearest me. They understood at once. One of them grasped my hand and whispered: "Good-by, comrade, and good luck to you. I'd try it, too, if I'd stood all you've had to put up with."

We had been marching for about another hour when I saw, as the search-light flashed in my direction, that we had reached a point on our route peculiarly adapted to my purpose. The road ran along a high terrace with shelving banks, descending steeply to the little mountain stream that flowed down the gorge to join that other stream that had its source in the Three Sisters Spring.

"Now is my chance," I whispered to my neighbors, and the moment the search-light passed beyond me I crouched low and rolled noiselessly over the edge of the bank. I lay quietly under a low-growing spruce-bush, listening breathlessly to the steady tramp of marching feet. There was no outcry, no halting of the long line, and as the tail-light of the marching column passed out of sight around a curve in the road, I rose to my feet in the pitch blackness and scrambled and slid down the steep mountain-side.

When I reached the brook-side it was a comparatively



easy matter to turn and follow its windings back to the foaming cascade, and then to climb up the steep bank beside its roaring waters to the Three Sisters.

I say it was comparatively easy, and yet so slow was my progress, feeling my way cautiously in the dark, sometimes with my feet, sometimes with my hand, before I took each step, that it must have taken nearly three hours to cover a distance that had consumed but an hour of march along the level road.

I thought I knew the exact spot where Witkowski had fallen, but darkness is bewildering. I groped around fruitlessly for fully fifteen minutes, and I had just begun to fear that Keltowitch had sent some one back for him and carried him off, when I thought I heard a faint moan. I called softly: "Witkowski!" My cry was answered by another and louder moan, and guided by the sound, I quickly found him. But there was little I could do, except to grope my way to the spring, return with my cap full of water, and bathe his face and lips with its icy contents to hasten returning consciousness.

All this time I had not once thought of Siegfried's bundle of necessities. Now, as I cudgelled my brain to think of some way to help Witkowski more efficiently, it flashed through my mind that there might be something in that bundle for such an emergency. It took some time to grope my way to the left-hand rock, and more time to find the bundle securely tucked away in a deep recess under the ledge. But once having found and opened it, I felt that most of my troubles were over.

For the first thing my hand came upon was an electric

flash-light. I turned it on quickly—with light everything else was made easy; groping in the dark had been bewildering and disconcerting. The light disclosed that the package was indeed “a bundle of necessities.” First and foremost came a German uniform that had evidently seen service, but it was clean, and with the odor of fumigation still lingering about it. Wrapped in the uniform was a little bag of German gold and silver, a package of four generous sandwiches made of *white* bread and ham, another package of sweet chocolate large enough to sustain life in the two of us for several days, an automatic pistol and cartridges, a road-map, a drinking-cup, a box of matches, and last of all—a treasure that I pounced upon with joy—a flask of brandy!

For here was the very thing I needed, here was life for Witkowski. By the light of my electric flash I hurried to the spring, dipped a little water in the cup, added as much more brandy, and in a few moments had succeeded in forcing some of the life-giving fluid between Witkowski’s close-set teeth.

After he had swallowed a few drops the effect was immediate. The light from the flash illuminated both our faces, and he opened his eyes and smiled feebly up at me.

“What is the matter, Mr. Hatfield?” he asked faintly.

For answer I gave him the rest of the contents of the cup, and consciousness returned fully.

“Oh, yes, I remember,” he answered himself, almost in his natural voice. “Keltowitch knocked me down. But how did you get here? And where are the others?”

I told him briefly how I had made my escape and returned to look for him, and in his excitement he sat up quickly and came near to fainting again.

"Go slow, comrade," I commanded, as I put my arm around him to steady him, pouring a few drops of raw brandy from the flask between his lips. The brandy revived him and his first thought was for me. His first words were:

"You must get away from here instantly. They will look for you here."

"Yes, I think they will," I answered. "We must get away as soon as possible. Do you think you could stand on your feet and walk a little?"

"Oh, you must not think of me!" he exclaimed impatiently. "I will only be a burden to you. They cannot do much worse to me than they have already done, but Keltowitch evidently has it in for you, and if he catches you, you 're a dead man."

"Then we 're in the same boat," I smiled at him. "Don't you know that he who strikes a German officer is a dead man? I will never leave you. If we die, we die together. But we need n't go far, only far enough to hide ourselves until the hunt is over. I think you can make it."

He swore softly under his breath, whether at me or at the Germans I could not be sure. Then he spoke roughly, but I felt the roughness was assumed to hide a softer feeling.

"Come, help me on to my feet, will you? I 've always heard the English were obstinate, and if I *must* go, the quicker the better."

I did not quite like his roughness, though I thought I understood it. To my amazement, however, when I stood him on his feet, where he stood swaying a moment and then steadied himself, he threw his arm around my neck, drew down my head, and kissed me fervently on both cheeks.

"God bless you, Hatfield!" he said huskily. "You 're the right sort. I 'll do my best not to be a hindrance to you."

After that I had no more trouble with him. I hastily wrapped up Siegfried's uniform and slung it over my shoulders like a knapsack. The money, pistol, sandwiches, cup, road-map, matches, chocolate, and flask I disposed about my person within easy reach. Then, with my one arm supporting Witkowski and directing the flash-light, we stumbled and slid down the side of the cascade to the little stream at the foot of the gorge. Here we rested a few minutes, our light out, and before we started on again, I dipped my cup in the stream, poured some brandy into it from the flask, and administered another restorative to Witkowski. It had a surprising effect. He sprang to his feet unaided.

"Look here, Mr. Hatfield—"

"Hugh," I interrupted him.

"All right, if you 'll call me Wincenti, Hugh," he laughed.

My English tongue stumbled over the foreign-sounding name, but I promised to use it and he went on with his interrupted sentence:

"If you 'll help me to find a stout stick, Hugh, I can walk alone and you can have the use of your arm."

It was certainly a better arrangement, for there was no knowing when I might need that arm, and the stick was easily found.

All night we crept slowly down the gorge toward Eisenach, though we intended to give that town a wide berth. We made frequent long stops for rest, always with our light extinguished and listening anxiously for any sound of pursuit. Toward morning I thought I discovered signs that Witkowski was giving out, and I insisted that we sit down under a spreading pine whose needles made a soft seat and whose broad trunk made a comfortable back, and there we waited until dawn. We did not dare go to sleep, and I thought it a good time to produce my sandwiches. We each ate one—they were big enough for a good-sized meal—and a spring at our feet furnished us with refreshing draughts of delicious water. I put a little brandy in Witkowski's cup, but it had to be done surreptitiously with not enough for him to taste, as he declared that he would not touch another drop, he had already had much more than his share, and a time might come when I would find myself in dire need of it.

Whether it was the sandwich or the brandy, something put new life into Vincent—I had Anglicized his name—and he professed himself eager for the march again. But there were faint signs of the coming day and I thought it better to wait. The cold just before dawn is a little more penetrating than any during the other twenty-four hours. I remembered the military cloak in Siegfried's bundle and wrapped it around us both, and with the warm pine needles for a couch we were fairly comfortable.

I had watched many dawns since I had become a soldier, but never have I seen the day break so gloriously as on that morning in the mountains, and I took it as a good omen. As it began to grow light we discovered that we were on the edge of a little park encircled by lofty peaks, rugged and picturesque in outline. Through the center of the park the mountain stream we had been following wound its shining way, and every blade of grass, and autumn flower, and scarlet vine wreathing the tree-trunks, and every lowly bush turned golden in the October air, was heavily rimed with glistening white hoar-frost. Between the nearer hills, pine-clad to their summits, and the more distant rocky crests lay lakes of violet mist that turned to gold as the first rays of the sun touched them, then gradually rose in rolling billows of silver mist around the loftiest crests.

We were both so absorbed in the beauty of the picture that lay below us that at first we did not hear the faint clatter of distant hoofs. When I became aware that I had been hearing it for some time without recognizing it, I sprang to my feet.

"What's that?" said Witkowski, catching the sound at the same moment.

"I'm afraid it's cavalry," I answered, glancing hastily around as I spoke.

Behind us rose a low ridge of massive rocks and boulders, with scattered tufts of ragged shrubbery clinging to their sides. Among those rocks there must be many a good hiding-place.

"Come!" I said, gathering up cloak and uniform without waiting to tie them in a bundle. "We must hurry. Do you think you can climb, Vincent?"

"I can do anything," he answered gaily, "after I've had another drink of water."

He stooped to the little spring, filled the cup, and handed it to me. I drained it at a swallow, and while I was waiting for him to refill it for himself my eyes fell on an empty beer-bottle. I had been wishing for some kind of water-jug to take to our hiding-place; here was one to my hand. I seized it, rinsed it thoroughly, filled it with water, and taking one of Beatrice's letters from my pocket rolled it into a secure stopper. Beatrice, I felt, would not object to such use of her letters.

All this had not taken five minutes, but already the sound of hoofs was growing more distinct. At any moment the head of the troop might turn the curve of the road that wound around the mountain-side across the little stream from us.

"Come!" I said again, and began to climb as fast as I could, my one arm encumbered by the heavy bundle and the bottle. Vincent was not so encumbered and was smaller and lithier than I. He sprang lightly up the rocks ahead of me, and in a few minutes called down to me in a guarded voice: "I've found just the place!"

Then seeing that I was overladen, he climbed down the rocks, seized the cloak from my arm and the bottle from my hand, and with a whispered, "For God's sake, hurry, Hugh!" sprang up the rocks again.

I thought he must have seen something, but I would not stop to look over my shoulder. Lightened of my burden I was not far behind him, but neither of us were a moment too quick. The spot he had found was an overhanging ledge of rock forming a small cave, hardly more than a crevice and partly screened by a scraggly

growth of bushes. Into this refuge we crawled, and as we turned to peer through the screen of protecting bushes we saw a squad of cavalry come into sight around the curve. It halted, while the leader swept the park with his glasses.

They were not so far away but that we could see them distinctly, for this was just where the gorge began to widen into the park-like valley, and we could even hear the murmur of their voices. I do not mind confessing that we crept as far back into the dark crevice of the rock as we could go, and lay there quaking until the impact of hoofs, on the hard mountain road, gradually grew fainter in the distance.

When we ventured to peep through our bushes once more they were just winding out of sight between two sentinel peaks at the farther end of the valley. Drawing long breaths of relief, we set about making ourselves comfortable for a good sleep.

But first I changed to the German uniform, hiding my own in the darkest corner of the little cave. I was distressed about Vincent, for we were to pose as two wounded German soldiers just released from hospital, and I was afraid his Russian uniform would betray him. But his quick wit found a way. He was wearing the fanciful uniform of some crack Polish lancers, but the foundation was a kind of green khaki very near the color of the German one I was wearing. With his penknife he quickly ripped off the fanciful decorations and stowed them away with my old uniform, leaving merely some bands of braid on the sleeves that could easily pass for a German sergeant's stripes. With a few precious drops of water from my bottle, he sponged



and rubbed the spots left by the decorations until there was little betraying evidence of them. His movements had a cat-like swiftness and deftness that amazed me, and that I greatly envied—for I was always somewhat clumsy with my hands—and in less than half an hour we were ready for sleep.

We fell at once into such deep slumber that I doubt if bursting shrapnel would have wakened us. But what shrapnel could not accomplish, the pangs of hunger did. Promptly at twelve we both opened our eyes, ravenously hungry. We made a meal from the two remaining sandwiches, and though we could have eaten six more with pleasure, the keen edge of our hunger was satisfied. And with a cup of water each from our bottle, we lay down again, and in a moment were once more sound asleep.

The sun was setting between the high twin peaks at the foot of the valley when we woke again, this time thoroughly refreshed, and ready, after our frugal supper of a cake of chocolate each, for our night's march. Our bottle was empty, but as soon as it grew dark enough we would descend to the little spring and drink our fill, then follow the banks of the winding stream where it flowed westward toward the Rhine.

This first day of our flight was like most of our days, traveling by night and hiding by day. Only, as our stock of chocolate grew ominously low, we found it necessary each morning to visit some farmhouse to lay in provisions for the day. Posing as soldiers returning from the war, we were treated so generously that our conscience sometimes hurt us, particularly as it was seldom that we could persuade the good

hausfrau—she always had either a son or a husband in the army about whom she inquired solicitously and whom we usually professed to know—to take the money we pressed upon her.

In a few days we had left the Thuringian Forest behind us. By the aid of our map and my memory we were directing our course along that very road back of Cassel which I had once traversed with Marcel, a road that would furnish us a short cut to Wiesbaden. We were setting our course toward Alsace, and so to France. I could not be thankful enough now that I had accompanied Marcel on his flight, and so knew every step of the road.

But it was a weary way and we were weeks in covering it. The tingling, exhilarating air of October had given place to the chilling winds of November, and these in turn to the snows and ice of December, by the time we neared the borders of France. I began to have grave fears for Vincent. His step lagged, the fire was gone from his eye, and that nimble tongue of his seldom wagged. I was not in much better case, but I knew I must keep strength and spirits for both; it would never do to give out with the goal almost in sight.

Our difficulties had increased tenfold as we neared the border. It was now almost impossible to find a good hiding-place during the day, so overrun was the country by marching soldiers, and it was almost as dangerous to travel at night, since sentries never slept. It was seldom now that we dared approach a farm-house to obtain food, and we often went hungry for days at a time. I have sometimes wondered since why, when we did so venture, our ravenous appetites did not arouse suspicion

among the farmers' wives. If we could have had good food and plenty of it, our strength would have kept up, but we fought shy of towns and villages, and farm-houses were too often billeted with soldiers to make it safe to venture near.

Day by day I saw Vincent grow paler and thinner, and day by day I felt myself grow weaker. The wintry blasts that in robust health we would have joyed to buffet now cut like knives, and in our daytime hiding-places we lay close together for warmth, shivering under the heavy military cloak that we used for a coverlet.

At last there came a night when we determined to make the great venture: we would cross the lines. We both felt it was now or never, for our strength would not hold out much longer. It was not far from Verdun that we decided to attempt the crossing, and we realized that the entering of our own lines was going to be as dangerous, maybe more so, as to pass the German lines. For three days we had been hovering in the neighborhood, not daring to make the attempt and yet every moment in danger of discovery, and we felt we could wait no longer.

The night could not have been blacker had it been made for our purpose. There was no moon and heavy clouds hid the stars. If we could only keep out of range of the myriad twinkling lights that marked the bivouac of regiments and escape the search-lights of both French and Germans that raked sky and earth, we might hope to succeed.

Slowly and painfully we crept through the thick blackness, our hearts beating like trip-hammers so that we thought they must betray us by their noise. Twice we

were challenged out of the dark: "Who goes there!" But we remained motionless, hidden by the night, until we dared to move noiselessly away from the danger spot.

At last came the supreme moment. We were almost through the lines and were beginning to breathe more freely when suddenly a light flashed out of the blackness and at the same moment some one cried, "Halt!" We caught the gleam of a rifle-barrel levelled at us, for we were in the full glare of the flash-light. There would be no explaining our presence there at such an hour, and it was no time to hesitate. I drew Siegfried's little automatic from my pocket and aimed straight toward that gleaming rifle.

There was a sharp cry, a groan, a crash. Flash-light and rifle disappeared in the darkness. My God! Had that bullet gone through my own flesh I could not have felt more deadly sick and faint. Once more I was a murderer. This was not war, to take deliberate aim at a man in the dark, and my blood ran cold with hatred of myself and this hideous war that had made me what I was.

But there was no time for remorse.

"Run, Vincent!" I whispered, and seized his hand that we might not lose each other in the dark. We had chosen this spot for crossing because the lines were only a few hundred yards apart. Could we but cover that intervening space, we were safe; or at least, if we were to die, we would die on friendly ground with some chance of our friends learning our fate.

As we started forward we heard sounds behind us that showed the report of my pistol had roused the camp. There was quick running of feet, the twinkling

of lights, and then the pop, pop of rifles. The shots went wide of their mark, but a chance bullet might strike us at any moment or a flash-light give them their mark. I pulled Vincent along faster, but he dragged back, a dead weight, and presently sank to the ground.

"I can't go a step farther, Hugh," he groaned. "Leave me to my fate and save yourself."

"You 're not hit?" I gasped, aghast at the dreadful possibility.

"No, but I 'm all in. Run, Hugh, *run!*" he implored.

For answer I stopped and with my one arm managed to sling him on my back.

"Put your arm around my neck and hold tight!" I ordered sternly. "I will never leave you, and this is the only chance for us."

He was powerless to resist, and though he groaned "I wish you would save yourself and not mind me," he clung tight, and I broke into a full run.

Vincent was smaller and lighter than Harold, much lighter, since he had been starving for days. Had I been well and well-fed, my task would have been an easy one. But I was weak from lack of food and still was not fully recovered from my wounds. As I pounded heavily on Vincent's light weight began to feel like a mountain on my shoulders. My breath came in labored gasps, my head felt as if at any moment it would split open, my eyes, smarting and burning like coals of fire, were starting from my head. I began to despair of reaching those lines that now seemed miles away. Very soon my legs would refuse to move—we would sink down and die together.

Still I ran on. Bullets were now whistling closer. Any moment one might strike, and to add to our peril the shots began to be returned from the French trenches, for we were between the two firing lines. My breath was coming in great sobs of agony. I was blind, dizzy, and staggering beneath my load. At the next step I might fall.

"Put me down!" Vincent implored in my ear. But I grasped his hand and held it with an iron grip.

It was well that I did so, for I felt the arm around my neck relax, the load on my back become a dead weight. Vincent had fainted—or could he be dead?

All this time I had been saying over and over in my bewildered brain: "I am Captain Hatfield of the Royal Devonshire Foot. This is Lieutenant Witkowski of the Russian Lancers. We are escaped prisoners."

Over and over I repeated this, for I feared my brain would refuse to act when we reached our own lines unless I coned my lesson like a parrot. In our German uniforms we would be captured as spies and shot.

All at once from our own lines there flashed out a search-light. Swiftly the broad arc swept upon us and stopped.

"Now we will be shot by our own men," I reflected dully.

But with a sudden inspiration I snatched the handkerchief still bound about Vincent's head, the handkerchief I had put there to hide the disfiguring bruises that evidently were no wounds of war. Now I waved it aloft as a flag of truce. I saw men run out from the trenches close at hand and cover us with rifles.

"I am Captain Hatfield of the Royal Devonshire Foot. This is Lieutenant Witkowski of the Russian Lancers. We are escaped prisoners," I recited like an automaton, and knew no more. I had fallen in a dead faint.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### MY TWO HEROES

**I**T was a fearfully dark night, so dark I could not see my hand before my face. I was in a wild and rugged mountain forest, and at any moment was in danger of stepping off the narrow path and plunging headlong into fathomless depths. A man was hidden behind the next big boulder waiting for me to pass so that he might shoot me. I fooled him. I crept up softly behind the boulder and shot him in the back. A-a-a-a! How he yelled! I yelled, too, in sheer surprise at the sound. Other men sprang up behind other rocks,—ten, fifty, a hundred of them. Though the night was pitch black, I could see them as dim and shadowy shapes. They tried to seize me; they sprang at me from all sides. Right and left I swung my sword and cut off arms and legs and heads. But they captured me. They took me to a hospital. The surgeon looked at me and said he must cut off my arm. I swore at him and told him I would cut off his head if he did. He looked at me again and said he would cut off both my arms. Whereupon I sprang up from the bed and jumped out of the window.

It was black night again, and I dropped miles through the blackness, and gradually fell asleep. When I awoke I was at the Abbey. Harold and I were playing hare-and-hounds on our ponies. I was “hare” and Harold



could n't catch me. I heard him call "Hugh! Hugh! Old Hugh!" in a voice so faint and far away and so full of sadness that I slowly opened my eyes.

Yes, there was Harold kneeling beside me, my hand held close in both of his, his eyes swimming with tears. Only this time it was a flesh-and-blood Harold, and not a shadowy vision of a dream.

"Hugh! Old Hugh!" he said as I opened my eyes, and never had I heard such love and tenderness in any voice.

"Harold," I answered him. But could that weak, squeaky voice be mine? What was the matter? I tried to speak again.

"Where is Witkowski?"

"Here I am, Hugh." It was the same well-clipped tone, but the man who came into view around the head of my cot was so gaunt and pale that at first I did not recognize him.

"What's the matter with you? You look like a ghost," I asked in my high, weak voice.

"We've both been ill. But naturally you've been the sicker of the two, since you had to bear the burden of it all. You saved my life, Hugh."

I think he tried to say this flippantly, but there was a quaver in the last words and the nurse on guard spoke up promptly:

"Time's up, Colonel Hatfield. My patient must rest now."

Later in the day I saw them both again, and the next day I saw each of them separately several times and for longer periods. Day by day my strength came back. No longer was my voice squeaky, and my nurse said my

rapid recovery was marvellous and the doctor said it was wonderful.

Harold's leave was up at the end of a week, and he went back to the trenches. For it was winter, that long and hideous winter in the trenches. There were no gallant charges now, no driving the enemy back, no glorious dashes to capture men and guns. There was nothing but a deadly monotony of loathsome life, so Harold said.

During that week of his stay I had learned several things. The first was that after they had picked up Witkowski and me and carried us to the hospital, Vincent recovered consciousness almost immediately, but that for two weeks I lay in a stupor from which nothing could rouse me. Out of this stupor they never expected me to come alive. Then for another week I was violently delirious, alternating with periods of unconsciousness. And my nurse told me that when Harold arrived and saw me lying in that death-like stupor with one arm gone, he fell on his knees beside my cot and buried his face in his arms, sobbing aloud as she had never before heard a strong man sob. "And there was n't a dry eye in the ward," declared the nurse as she finished her recital.

I learned, too, that Witkowski had been very ill for a while, due to sheer exhaustion; and that when he became better and heard that I was not expected to recover he raved like a madman. It was all his fault. If I died, he would be no better than a murderer. I could have managed my own escape without any trouble, but when I had to carry him, like a *Sinbad*, it was too much for any man.

And I learned, also, that he and Harold were both watching me when I recovered consciousness and opened

my eyes, and that Vincent had dived behind the head of my bed and was "crying like a baby," when he heard me ask for him, and had to dry his eyes before he could come out.

But one thing I did not learn. I could get no information of Beatrice. When I dared, I asked Harold about her, but he had never met "Miss Ludlow" and knew nothing concerning her. I felt that it was due Beatrice to be told of my escape, for I owed it to her intervention with von Dreidorf that I was now alive and back on French territory, and as soon as I was able I asked my nurse to write a letter at my dictation. I had it addressed to "Field Hospital Number Ten, stationed near St. Quentin in October," and I put my address on the envelope, so that it might be returned if not delivered.

Two weeks later it came back unopened. I wondered why, but I was growing so strong that in another week I could set out for my regiment and find Beatrice for myself.

And in another week Witkowski and I started out together. I was to report to my colonel—Harold was now my colonel—and would beg a place for Witkowski with my old regiment. For Witkowski declared himself perfectly fit and eager to be at work again, and there was no hope, of course, of his getting back to his own regiment in Galicia. He was quite sure he could do a lieutenant's work with one arm, and if he could only be a lieutenant in my company, he would be forever grateful to me. To serve under me as captain, he declared in his extravagant foreign way, would be greater bliss than often fell to the lot of mortal.

But neither Harold nor my father—who had crossed

the Channel to visit me in camp—nor, indeed, the general of my brigade, thought me fit for service yet. My first lieutenant was to remain in command of my company as he had been for the last three months and the second lieutenant would take his place, while Witkowski, at least for the time, would be second lieutenant. Thereupon Vincent proceeded to give such a daring display of horsemanship and skilful swordsmanship with one arm, that it convinced Harold and every other spectator that he was worth more than most men with two.

I think it caused my father great grief that I would not go back with him to spend my enforced furlough at the Abbey, but aside from my desire to remain near the front, ready for service when the surgeons should say I was fit to fight, there was another strong reason for my staying in France: I was determined to find Beatrice.

And no sooner had I seen my father safely off for Dover than I set out on my hunt. Of course I first looked up Field Hospital Number Ten. The same Red Cross officers were in charge as had been there when I was a familiar figure about the hospital. They recognized me and gave me a cordial welcome back from captivity, but none knew anything about Beatrice. She had resigned from field work early in November and had turned her ambulance over to a young man. Would I care to see him?

I saw the young man, but he knew no more than the others. He only knew that Beatrice was a charming young lady, that she had said she was very sorry to be compelled to give up her ambulance, and that she had hoped he would do good work with it.

The superintendent of nurses came nearest to knowing something. She had an impression that Miss Ludlow

had gone back to America with an odd little old lady who visited her in camp. I might inquire of the post-office department whether she had left any forwarding address, for she had left none with the hospital authorities.

I inquired at the post-office. Miss Ludlow had left a forwarding address good for only one month, as she expected to return soon. At the end of that month the post-office people had destroyed the address, but they thought it had been somewhere in America.

Did they think it had been the State of Kentucky?

Yes, they believed it had, but as to the name of the town they had no remembrance.

So once more I had lost all clues to Beatrice. As had happened twice before in Dresden I had failed to get an address. Why had I never asked her for the name of her home-town? Now I had no hope of ever seeing her again. Well, was not that as well? Did I want to present myself before her in my maimed and enfeebled condition? Had I not fully resolved that I could never again ask her to marry me, and would it not be difficult to keep to that resolution if I were with her?

It was all very well to philosophize, but all the more strongly, because I was hurt and sick, my soul longed for Beatrice. Perhaps it was due to this sense of emptiness in my life that I did not make a complete recovery. I dawdled around camp, visited the trenches often—especially those where my old regiment was on duty—and saw all the horrors of trench-life which I had escaped and yet would rather share than feel myself such an idler. Sometimes I helped with Red Cross work, when they would accept volunteer service, but most Red Cross work

requires two hands, and skilful ones at that, so that it was not often I could be of any use.

I was terribly restless, and growing more so all the time. If it had not been that Harold devoted much of his spare time to me, I believe I would have been in danger of falling into settled melancholy. He was always full of life, always gay, and had many tales of afternoon teas and dinners at headquarters, for I had long since discovered that Harold was a great favorite. And the teas and dinners were often graced by pretty women, for it was quite the fad that winter to run over from England to visit the men in camp.

Harold was often the bearer of invitations for me, and he urged my acceptance of them, but I always made my empty sleeve an excuse. It was true that I felt sensitive about the inevitable awkwardness of handling knife and fork or tea-cup with one hand, but that was not my sole reason for declining. I had no heart for festivities of any kind, so deeply oppressed was I by the horrors of this awful war. It sometimes seemed to me that I alone bore the whole weight of the war on my shoulders; officers and men went gaily and carelessly on their way through the loathsome life of the trenches, seemingly unmindful of the horror of seeing every day their comrades borne away wounded, dying, or dead.

Yet I knew, even at the time, that theirs was a saner attitude than mine. No amount of mourning for those who were gone, remorse for those I had sent to death, or apprehension of a dreadful future could alter matters one whit. All it did was to make a morose, uncompanionable fellow of me and unfit me for contributing my mite toward putting an end to the tragedy.

No doubt I would have done better to accept the invitations brought me by Harold from many a gay officers' mess, even from headquarters itself, and to have borne myself, on the outside at least, as carelessly as those brave fellows who, for aught I knew, suffered as intensely as I, but had the courage and good manners to conceal their sufferings.

There was another reason why I think I might have done well to accept those invitations: I should have put some restraint upon Harold. For Harold, brave, gay, splendid Harold, the idol of my boyhood, the hero of my heart, was drinking more than was good for him. I had noticed it in the unnatural brightness of his eyes, growing, it seemed to me, into a settled, glassy stare; in the excitability of his speech in strong contrast to his usual cool good-sense and gay good-humor; sometimes, even, in a thickening of the voice that went to my heart, for Harold's voice was a wonderful instrument, attuned to utter all that was gay and good and beautiful.

I attributed this change in Harold to those teas and dinners of which he was always telling me. Bits of gossip as to the revelry indulged in began to seep through to the ranks, with varying effect. In some of the men it fostered a desire to imitate in whiskey and rum the wine and champagne revels of their officers; in others it induced a lack of confidence in their leaders and a tendency to censorious criticism, deplorable, it seemed to me, when officers and men had equally so much at stake and were so interdependent in a great cause.

Dwelling on the broad and general aspects of this state of affairs cost me some sleepless nights. I could have wished our King George had the will and authority of his

cousin, Nicholas, to prohibit the sale and use of all intoxicants. I feared a deterioration in the fighting qualities of our officers and men, due to this growing habit among them.

But if I lay awake some nights dwelling on the general aspects of this condition, I lay awake many more thinking of Harold and longing to do something to rescue him from what I began to call "destruction." I had such a vivid remembrance of his distaste for my temperance sermon, that evening on the Cher, that I did not dare repeat it, yet there came a day when I felt I would be a coward and guilty of my brother's blood if I did not say something to him.

I messed with my old regiment, and after one of those teas I so much dreaded the colonel came in late to dinner. It was evident in a moment that he was in very bad humor. He swore at us for waiting for him, as it was our duty to do; he swore at the two orderlies, who served as butler and second-man at the table, because they were "so infernally slow with the service," and he uttered loud threats of court-martialing the cook, because his beef was overdone.

Harold was a great favorite with his officers, as he was with his men. I tried to cover his condition by engaging the other officers in a discussion on the day's manœuvres, and they seconded me loyally, but Harold had just sense enough to see that he was being ignored, yet not enough to pretend not to see it. He broke out into abuse of all of us, abuse that no self-respecting man, who was not his brother, could stand. One by one, on some pretext or other, the mess slipped away, until I was left alone with Harold. Alone, except for the two



orderlies in attendance, but at a nod from me they, too, slipped away, leaving the table in disorder. Harold realized he was deserted, and understood why, but he was so little himself that he was incensed rather than shamed by this action of his officers.

"Hand me the whiskey and soda, will you, old Hugh?" he asked in sheer bravado, since the bottles had been placed near me for safe-keeping.

"I think you've had enough, Harold; and perhaps more than enough," I answered steadily, though inwardly quaking.

At that he broke out in a perfect storm of abuse, swearing at me and finally ordering me, as his subordinate officer, to hand him the whiskey.

I remained inflexible, and yet I did not want to anger him. This seemed to me the opportunity, if there ever was to be one, to remonstrate with him about his growing habit.

"Harold," I said quietly, "you will thank me tomorrow morning. It is time to call a halt. You are the joy and pride of our father's life; you have always been my hero and idol. Your officers and men have loved and honored you as few men are loved and honored by their subordinates. You will break our father's heart and mine, and you will lose the love and respect of your officers and men—and all on account of these miserable teas and dinners at headquarters!"

I had not expected him to let me finish. I thought every moment he would interrupt me with more violent abuse. To my amazement, when I had ended and glanced up at him, his eyes were suffused with tears and

his chin was quivering. In a moment he laid his head down upon his arms on the table and sobbed aloud. I knew this emotion was more than half maudlin, and it shamed me to see it in my splendid, manly brother. But I realized this phase was at least better than his recent one of violence, and I waited a moment, hoping he would quiet himself. When he did not I moved up beside him and put my arm across his shoulders.

"Come, Harold," I said, "we will get to bed. You will feel better in the morning."

He allowed me to assist him to the tent we occupied together, help him off with his clothes, and in a few minutes he fell into a heavy drunken sleep.

I lay awake long. How I had hated to speak to him; how I had dreaded his anger! Well, it was a lesson to me never to shirk a duty if I felt convinced it was a duty. The nettle grasped like a man of mettle soft as silk remains. If this lapse had been the first, or even the tenth, I might not have felt justified in speaking, but it was evident to everyone that it was no longer a lapse, but rapidly becoming a confirmed habit with Harold; and besides, I had always the awful warning of Belden of Magdalen before my mind. It not only was my duty to speak; it was a dire necessity. I had been forced to do it.

Harold the next morning was a different Harold. He was irritable, and evidently as miserable as a man is liable to be the next morning, but he tried hard to control his irritability and was genuinely repentant.

"I am bitterly ashamed, Hugh," he said, and this time there was nothing maudlin about the way he said it; he spoke quietly and firmly. "You are right; it is time

to call a halt. I will cut out those teas and dinners—they are not fit pastimes for a soldier, I know. You will never again have cause to be ashamed of me, old Hugh.”

I know how hard it is to stick to a resolve like that when a habit has become as fixed as I feared Harold’s had, but I hoped. How I hoped!

That afternoon Harold, Witkowski, and I received a summons to headquarters. This was not an invitation to tea, but an order not to be disobeyed. I went with some inner quakings, for I feared Harold’s conduct was to be investigated and that Witkowski and I had been summoned as witnesses. But it was I who was on trial, not Harold.

Headquarters were in a picturesque old farm-house a mile or two back from the trenches. We were ushered into a long, low room with a big fire of logs blazing in a wide chimney-place at one end. A table was drawn up in front of the fire, and on the table were maps, charts, and papers of many descriptions, while around it was gathered a group that one could see at a glance was remarkable.

As we stood at salute by the door I felt myself thrilled by a sensation I have seldom experienced. I had always accused Harold of being a hero-worshipper and claimed for myself to be of cooler blood, but there were two men living for whom I felt an ardor somewhat akin to worship, and I believed I now stood in the presence of both of them.

In the group around the table were corps-commanders, generals of divisions and brigades, and the commander-in-chief, easily distinguishable by a gay insouciance of manner peculiar to him. Evidently this had been a

council of importance, but why were we summoned to it?

When I was a lad of nine and Harold eleven our father had taken us to Oxford for Commemoration Week. It was to be a great occasion, he said, one that would live in the annals of Oxford, and he wanted us to be present at it. How he managed to smuggle us into the Sheldonian I do not know, except that he was a friend of the chancellor and through him may have secured tickets for two little fellows in the high gallery of the theater. From there we saw the stately procession file into the theater, gorgeous in satin gowns with hoods of every color of the rainbow, and our little hearts swelled with pride to see our father near the head of the procession with the high dignitaries. And when the three entered who were to make this one of Oxford's most significant Commemorations, we clapped and stamped and shouted in our shrill voices until our lungs were like to burst, and yet could hardly hear ourselves for the wild tumult the undergraduate Oxonians were making.

There was plenty of respectful applause, but no great enthusiasm, for the Duke of York who was receiving a degree, and in so few years was to become Prince of Wales and then King George the Fifth. It was not the Duke of York, however, whom those young fellows went mad about. It was when the round, jovial face of Cecil Rhodes, burned to a vivid red by the suns of Africa, beamed on the house like some tropical sun itself that the Oxonians shouted themselves hoarse in welcome; and it was when the commanding figure of Kitchener, crowned by its mastiff-like head, loomed in sight, that the young fellows fairly went wild. That stern, rugged face made a tremendous impression upon the boy of nine,

and from that day the hero of Khartoum was my hero.

I had never seen him since, but there was no mistaking the face of the "English Mastiff." I knew I stood in his presence now, and I felt myself trembling at the knowledge. What had the great Kitchener to do with me, I wondered, or with Harold, or Witkowski? I was not left long to wonder.

"This is young Captain Hatfield we were speaking of, Earl," General French said, turning to Kitchener with that twinkle in his eye that women call fascinating and men call jolly. "And this is his brother, Colonel Hatfield, and his friend, Lieutenant Witkowski of the Polish Lancers. Captain Hatfield has had many adventures and I believe he can answer your questions."

I wondered how General French knew Witkowski and me and knew so much about us. We were rather embarrassed to be so formally introduced, but Lord Kitchener rose from his chair and shook hands with the three of us much more affably than I had been led to believe was his wont. General French followed the earl's example and the other men around the table nodded to us. We were at once put at our ease and were ready for business.

Business did not begin, however, until Kitchener had insisted that chairs be found and cigars offered us. The chairs we accepted, the cigars we declined.

"I hear you have been a prisoner in Germany," Kitchener began abruptly, when the clatter of chairs scraping on the stone floor had subsided.

"Yes, sir," I answered. "Lieutenant Witkowski and I are escaped prisoners."

Kitchener honored Vincent with a swift, rapier-like glance, which the latter received with his imperturbable smile, but he turned back immediately to me.

"How do they treat our men?"

"I believe, sir, very well, on the whole, though I have had little experience outside a hospital."

"Did they treat you well in the hospital?"

"They were exceedingly kind to me, sir."

"I see they have taken off your arm. Do you think it was necessary?"

I winced. I could not yet bear with equanimity any reference to my mutilation. Besides, I believed he was thinking of current reports that the Germans mutilated their prisoners whenever possible, so as to return them, when exchanged, unfit for fighting. It had been my own feeling, but I had to answer truly:

"I believe the surgeon thought it necessary; he seemed to be kind and capable."

"Were you willing to have it amputated?"

"I was most unwilling, and said so. I told them I preferred to die," I answered with involuntary bitterness.

"Did they use force? Did they compel you to submit to amputation?"

"No, sir; they used guile." Again I could not keep bitterness out of my voice. I could never think of the trick played on me without a hot flood of anger surging through my veins.

"How?" The monosyllable came with a sharp clip.

Very briefly I related how I had been put to sleep with morphine, an anesthetic administered, and when I awoke my arm was gone. I tried to make my statement as

matter-of-fact as possible, to keep myself and my emotions out of it, but perhaps I did not succeed entirely. To my amazement, the voice that had been harsh and clipping throughout my interrogation softened incredibly.

"Captain Hatfield," Kitchener said, "you have suffered much for your country and you deserve well at her hands. I am authorized to promote you to the rank of colonel, without a regiment at present, and I bear His Majesty's command that you present yourself at St. James on the fourteenth of the month to receive the Victoria Cross in recognition of capturing a battery single-handed and saving the life of an officer in action."

I was overwhelmed. The blood rushed to my head, then back to my heart in a great tidal wave. I tried to speak, but could find no voice. I could only stammer a miserable "Thank you, sir."

But even that was inaudible, for Harold, who had been as stunned as I for a moment, recovered himself quickly. With a great shout, "Hurrah for old Hugh!" he was upon me, wringing my hand, and Witkowski, on the other side, had his arm around my neck and was giving me resounding kisses on both cheeks. Then they were all upon me, laughing and congratulating me, shaking my hand and saying nicer things than any ordinary man could possibly deserve. All of them—brigadiers, division- and corps-commanders, General French and Earl Kitchener. All, that is, except one man—the man I was sure I had recognized on entering the room as my other hero. He alone sat quietly by the fire. But over the shoulder of Lord Kitchener—I was on my feet, of

course—I met a glance from his quiet blue eyes, a glance with such a smile in it as warmed the cockles of my heart.

But Kitchener was not done with me. As soon as the tumult of congratulation had died down a little, he began again.

“Sit down, Colonel Hatfield,”—I blushed at my new title so glib upon his lips—“I have a few more questions to ask.”

Thereupon he began an inquiry into my reasons for trying to escape, and how I had accomplished it. But I had hardly more than begun my explanation when Witkowski broke in, with more audacity than any Englishman would have dared exhibit in the presence of superior officers.

“Pardon, Lord Kitchener,” he said, “permit me to tell the story of the escape, if you please. I think I can relate it better than Colonel Hatfield.”

I believe Kitchener was a little shocked at the young fellow’s nerve, but he nodded. Witkowski was off like a race-horse from the barrier.

Such a picture of our escape as followed! A telling phrase here, a graphic word there, and the whole scene was before one’s eyes as if one were watching it acted on the stage. Kitchener never had to ask a question, but he seemed to be getting what he was wanting, for he listened intently, his keen eyes never shifting from Witkowski’s face. Those penetrating eyes would have flustered me and thrown me off the track, but they did n’t seem to trouble Vincent; rather, they spurred him on.

It was I who was flustered, terribly so. For with all a foreigner’s love of hyperbole, aided by his own exag-



gerated sense of gratitude, Vincent was making much of every small service I had rendered him, and saying little or nothing about his own good deeds. As he waxed more eloquent in his tale, adding dramatic touches as he went along, one would have thought I was everything that was brave, noble, chivalrous, daring, and devoted. According to Vincent I was Chevalier de Bayard, Richard Cœur de Lion, Sir Galahad, and Don Quixote, all rolled into one. I tried to halt him once; I really could n't stand it. But Kitchener stopped me.

"Never mind, Colonel Hatfield," he said. "He makes an excellent witness, much better than you."

After that I sat with my eyes down and jaws set, my cheeks burning, and tried not to listen. At last I heard Witkowski winding up in a voice of deepest emotion:

"Gentlemen, he saved my life over and over again. If I had a thousand lives, I would devote them all to him!"

Through the silence that followed the last words I still did not dare to lift my eyes, but sat with bent head, burning with confusion, looking, I have no doubt, like the fool I felt. Then one by one I heard the clearing of throats among the silent audience, and at length Lord Kitchener's voice, to my surprise a little husky:

"Mr. Witkowski, we thank you. I am convinced we could never have drawn out all this from Colonel Hatfield. Colonel Hatfield, it seems a strange service to ask of so gallant an officer, but as your brother and your general both tell me you are not yet fit for active serve, will you go to America and buy horses for us while you are recovering your health?"

If Kitchener had expected me to be displeased with this commission, he must have been astonished at the

avidity with which I seized upon it. I forgot my embarrassment, forgot everything except the word "America"! For me that meant Beatrice.

We were all on our feet talking, and I was receiving many instructions. I was to set out for London in the morning and sail for America in a week. I would receive written instructions as to the number of horses, the price to be paid, etc., in London, and there I would also be furnished with the necessary funds.

I had some questions of my own to ask, too, and through all our talk I was aware of that quiet figure still seated by the fire. Almost painfully conscious of it, for had he not heard Vincent's glowing eulogy of me? And was there any man living I would rather have had hear such things of me than the handsome fair-haired officer with the weather-browned face and smiling, blue eyes?

I did not dare look at him, but suddenly I was aware that he had arisen from his seat and was coming toward me. He stopped close beside me and I was compelled to lift my eyes.

"Colonel Hatfield," he said, in clear, carefully modulated English, "it gives me great pleasure to add my appreciation of your services and your bravery on the field." He was holding something in his closed hand, as he spoke. Now he opened it and displayed the glittering Order of Leopold, pinning it himself upon my breast.

What was I to do? I did not know. What I wanted to do was to bend my knee and kiss the hand of *Albert, King of the Belgians!*

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### I CATCH A GLIMPSE OF BEATRICE

**O**FF for America! The thought of it would have thrilled me at any time. To cross the ocean and visit our kinsmen of the great republic had always been one of my day-dreams. To that was now added the thought of seeing Beatrice, and the thrill was so much the greater.

For I never doubted that I would see her. Of course I knew that the United States covered a vast territory, but it is difficult for an Englishman who has never been to America to appreciate how vast, or I might have been less happily certain that I was soon to see Beatrice.

Yet my leaving England was not all happiness. On the Liverpool dock stood my gray-haired father, waving a farewell to the big steamer just casting loose out in the Mersey, and by his side was my splendid Harold, fair-haired and beautiful to look upon, and the slender young Pole who had grown very dear to me since we had shared privations and danger together. There was little going on in the trenches just then, and neither Harold nor Vincent had found it difficult to obtain leave of absence to spend a last week with me in England.

It had been a busy week with me, for there were more arrangements to be made for buying horses and getting them safely transported to England than I had antici-

pated. The Germans had just launched their threat to establish a war zone on the seas, and this was to go into effect the day I sailed. None of us were much terrified by the threat; nevertheless it seemed wise to take extra precautions.

Also I had to give up one day, or the greater part of it, to receiving the Victoria Cross. Not that I begrudged the time. "Far from it," as Miss Martin would have expressed it. But it was rather a trying ordeal, and I was glad of the moral support of my father, Harold, and Vincent through the ceremony.

In addition, another day had to be eliminated for the Abbey. My father would have been unhappy if I had not consented to go down and say good-by to the place and servants, and, incidentally, to wear my two orders to dinner. This last performance was, I believe, the real reason for his insistence, and he had the whole family summoned to the dining-room after dinner to see and admire them. We four had gone down to the Abbey together one morning—I was glad of an opportunity to show Vincent the ancestral acres—and we all came back to London the next morning, my last in England.

So it had been rather a rush week and I had had little time for thought. Now, as I stood at the rail watching the three figures grow dim in the distance, gradually mingling indistinguishably with the throng on the dock, I felt a wave of sadness. Who knew whether I would ever again see any of the three? My father was no longer young, and no one could tell what a day might bring forth for the other two as long as this awful war continued.

No doubt that thought had been uppermost in the mind

of all four of us, for it had been rather an affecting farewell, though Vincent was the only one who openly voiced his regrets.

"'Ugh, dear old 'Ugh,'" he quavered,—Vincent was always inclined to drop his H's when excited, though at other times he pronounced them laboriously and meticulously—"let me go with you. *I* know how to buy horses."

"Not half as well as you know how to fight, Vincent; the British army can't spare you," I answered.

Whereupon he threw his arm around my neck, pulled my head down, and kissed me passionately on each cheek. This time I did not even blush. Instead, I returned the kisses gravely, though my father and Harold were looking on askance and a group of young American women, hurried home by this new threat of German submarines, snickered audibly at the spectacle.

I was thinking of this as I stood on the deck watching the shadowy shores of England grow dim while we rushed down the Irish Channel toward Queenstown. I thought of Vincent's kisses, of Harold's firm hand-grasp and "Good-by, old Hugh," of my father's "God bless you, my boy, and bring you back safely," and I registered a vow that my business should be transacted with despatch—my two businesses, of finding Beatrice and buying those horses—then I would hurry back, ready to take my place beside those two brave young fellows I had left waving a farewell from the dock.

There is no better place or time for taking an inventory of one's acts and mental attitude than on an ocean steamer during a six days' voyage. Mine did not prove any too satisfactory in retrospect. I had spent a good

two months in moping. I did not believe there was another soldier in the army who had lost an arm or a leg, or two of them, for that matter, who had taken his loss in such unsoldierly fashion. Winner of the Victoria Cross! I did not deserve it. As for my promotion, I believe if I had been in authority and a young fellow acted as I had been acting, I would have degraded him to the ranks, rather than promote him. It was all very well to say that I was not fit for service and hunt up an easy job to keep me occupied and amused, but I knew—though I had not before realized it—that my lack of fitness was entirely mental; that I had been sulking and fretting for Beatrice and my lost symmetry. Harold, whose moral superior I fear I had been considering myself, was on a loftier moral plane than I, cheerfully and gaily doing his duty like a man, and repining at nothing.

In my many hours of introspection on this quiet voyage, I was inclined to feel humble when I compared myself to Harold. And the more since, during that week we had spent together in London, I had not once seen any sign of his old weakness. A modest glass of claret with his dinner, or a little ale with his luncheon, was all he allowed himself; no man could have been more moderate. Moreover, his eye was as clear, his step as firm, his voice as clean-cut as that of the Harold of old. A man who could pull himself up so suddenly and so thoroughly was a man to be admired and imitated.

But six days of rushing winds and bracing air laden with the salt spray of the sea swept all megrim out of me. I stepped on the shores of America, after that sail up the wonderful harbor, a very different man from the one who had gone aboard the *Lusitania* at Liverpool. I

might not dare to try to win Beatrice, but there yet was a future for me. If I lived to see the end of this terrible war, there was no reason why I should not carry out my original program. A man could be as good a diplomat with one arm as with two. And perhaps, when I had achieved distinction in my profession,—as I firmly believed I would some day,—when I should be sent as envoy extraordinary, minister plenipotentiary, or dignified ambassador to one of the great courts, I would dare to ask Beatrice to go with me; and perhaps she would not refuse.

Hope and ambition were astir once more, and, in addition, a rare energy. My future looked as brilliant as this metropolis of the new world with its dazzling sun, its shining buildings towering to the sky, and hurrying throngs of keen-faced men and beautiful women.

I would have liked to stay longer in New York, for the gay city fascinated me, but my resolve to despatch this business and get back to real work on the lines or in the trenches drove me west to St. Louis. It was when I was purchasing tickets and making arrangements for the journey that I received my first vivid impression of the vastness of this great country, and my hope of finding Beatrice began to dwindle.

I had been two months in St. Louis, the two most crowded months of my life as far as work was concerned. My rooms consisted of a comfortable suite in a hotel overlooking the park, but every morning I must go across the river and be in the East St. Louis stock-yards by eight o'clock to inspect the great droves of horses coming in from the south and west. As it was some five or six miles

from my hotel to the river through crowded city streets, and then the bridge to be crossed and the drive to the stock-yards, one can readily realize that an eight o'clock appointment meant early rising and something of a hustle for breakfast. Fortunately I was prepared for this strenuous life by my experiences as a soldier, and I learned to love the early motor-ride in the cool of the morning, for spring months are hot in St. Louis and it was likely to be the only comfortable hour of the day until I came back to my hotel and my bath in the late afternoon. It was wonderful to cross the great river, miles wide from spring rains, and to see it, a shining flood in the early morning light, rolling down to the Gulf and, no matter how stagnant and sultry was the air in the city, on the bridge I would catch the cool breeze that never failed to sweep up the river from that same beneficent Gulf.

I not only came to be fond of that early morning ride, but I learned, in time, to like my business. Horses! I had not believed there were so many in the world as poured into those stock-yards day after day from the plantations of the south and the ranches of the west. Horses of every kind, from wild little broncos of the plains to spirited thoroughbreds from Kentucky. Some of them were beauties. I hated to see them doomed to the hard life and early death that is the fate of an army horse; though the great majority, of course, were just plain horse, good enough for that purpose.

I had been warned to look out for the Yankee horse-dealer. I had been told he would probably try to fleece me, but I could not see that he was any less honest or more tricky than is his kind in every land under the



sun. Fortunately every one knows the reputation of horse-dealers and is on the lookout for trickery, and, fortunately for me, the two orderlies I had brought over with me were as good judges of ordinary horse-flesh as I, and more keenly suspicious than I could bring myself to be until a few severe lessons had taught me the necessity for watchfulness. As a result, I think there were few spavined or winded horses palmed off on us, and none that over-reached, or interfered, or had bad eyes. I was rather proud of the lot of one hundred and fifty thousand we had sent on to New York to be shipped to England by the time our two months' work was over; and I was almost prouder of the thirty thousand mules we had started on the same route. I had never thought much of a mule, but these Missouri mules were such fine, big fellows, sleek-skinned, sound-winded, and smart as steel traps, that I learned to like them.

But my two months were not all hard work. I had taken several letters of introduction with me. At first I did not intend to present them, but two reasons made me change my mind. The first was that if I did not meet people, people of the right sort, I would miss opportunities for making inquiries about Beatrice. I had made many efforts to find her. I had consulted the directories of every city of importance in Kentucky—there did not seem to be many of them—and I had sent letters, with return address on the envelope, directed to Miss Beatrice Ludlow, and to Miss Hester Martin, to every town I could learn of in the State of Kentucky. But they had all come back. I would try meeting people and see what personal inquiries would do.

My second reason for presenting my letters was a new

resolve to lead a sane and healthful life, ignoring the social disabilities that my empty sleeve imposed upon me. More than likely I would grow morbid again, if I confined social intercourse to my two orderlies and the rough stockmen and cow-boys I met in East St. Louis.

Not that I did not like many of these men and find them interesting. I did; extremely so. One cow-boy in particular—he had brought on a lot of horses for some man living in the Rockies—I hope may always remain my friend. Jack Delano was his name, a picturesque young fellow in sombrero and “chaps,” clean-limbed, with clear-cut features, an eye by turns as mild as a fawn’s and as keen as an eagle’s, and a smile that I am sure must witch the heart out of those girls of the Golden West. It was his beauty that attracted me first, but it was his daring, his native wit, his good sense, and, above all, his modesty, that won me in the end. I hope to see Jack Delano in Devonshire some day. If I don’t, I will be tempted to take a trip to the Rockies just to hunt him up.

But I could never hope to learn anything of Beatrice from a cow-boy, and therefore, though with some misgivings, I presented my letters and was at once received with open arms and acclaimed a hero. I thought at first I didn’t like it, but they all seemed so sincere in their liking and had such a cordial and whole-souled fashion of expressing it—both men and women—that it would have taken a heart of adamant to withstand them. The pleasantest houses in the city were thrown open to me, and I was put up at the most exclusive country-clubs, where I had to learn to play all over again, with my one arm, a tolerable game of tennis and an intolerable game of golf.

I was in great danger of becoming spoiled, for more than one pretty woman said to me: "Why should n't we spoil you? We don't often have a real war hero to make much over, and you stand for the whole British, French, and Russian armies to us. We love them all!"

And I believe they did. Englishwomen themselves could n't have been more eagerly sympathetic over every bit of news from the Allies.

It was the last of April and I was dining at the Burtons', one of the houses where I felt most at home. My hostess and I were great chums, and my host was a charming fellow, as wholesouled as I had found most of his countrymen to be, and as modest as an Englishman, a combination I had not always met with in these delightful Americans. It had been a very hot day and the evening was still almost unbearably sultry, but the Burton dining-room opened by French doors upon a grass terrace and a walled garden. Below the terrace a fountain was throwing its cooling spray high into the air, and from a palm-room, opening into the dining-room by doors so wide as to make it virtually a part of the room, electric fans were sending cooling breezes neither too direct nor too strong. Our hostess had provided a menu in which iced bouillon, iced drinks, and fragrant fruit-ices alternated with hot dishes in such a way as to keep one in a delightfully cool condition as regards the inner man. For the first time that day I was thoroughly comfortable.

It was a gay little dinner-party; all people who knew each other well, and I knew them all and liked them. That is, I knew all except one. I was seated at my host-

ess's right, but next to me was a very pretty and piquant young woman whom I had never met. Something in her voice and her way of speaking reminded me of Beatrice, and I soon discovered that she was what the people of St. Louis call "a visiting girl," coming from Louisville, Kentucky. Of course the moment I learned this I was anxious to begin my inevitable inquiries, but for awhile there seemed no opportunity; either my hostess engrossed me or the conversation was too general.

But after dinner, out on the terrace where we took our coffee and cordial, with moonlight streaming through lofty trees and the plash of the fountain in its basin looking and sounding cooler than even the well-cooled dining-room had seemed, I found my chance. It was not all chance, either, for very deliberately I manœvered to take Miss Warfield around the garden, where early roses and lilies and late lilacs were filling the air with fragrance. Ostensibly I was showing her the garden's beauties by moonlight, but when we came to a garden-bench under some trees in a distant corner I prevailed upon her to sit down and finish her cigarette.

"Are *all* Kentucky women beautiful?" I murmured softly, in a poor attempt at flirtation. I was never good at it, but I went ahead brazenly. "I met one in Germany a year ago, and she, too, was extremely beautiful."

Miss Warfield ignored my impertinence.

"In Germany?" she exclaimed eagerly. "I wonder if it possibly could have been Beatrice Ludlow. She is certainly the most beautiful Kentucky girl I've ever seen, and she was in Germany about a year ago."

I fairly trembled with excitement. At last! Perhaps

in another minute I would know where to find Beatrice. It was with difficulty that I controlled my voice to answer:

"Yes, a Miss Ludlow. So you know her? But I do not think she came from Louisville."

"No, she lived in a little village not far from Lexington, on a big, old country place. I have often visited her, but it was at school that I knew her best; we were room-mates."

Why did n't she mention the village? Why did she make me ask her for its name? Ask for it I must, for I could not let this golden opportunity slip away.

She told me readily enough, but added slyly: "If you're thinking of visiting Beatrice, you'd better write first. I'm not sure she's at home; she's away most of the time."

"Has n't she been there this winter?"

"She was there early in the winter. She spent a day with me in Louisville on her way home, and I spent a week with her in December. But I've been in New York all winter, and I think I heard that Beatrice had gone, or was going, back to Germany. We girls suspect there's a man over there somewhere."

I had learned all that Miss Warfield could tell me of real importance, and I did n't wish to betray too much interest in Beatrice.

"Do you know Miss Martin, also?" I asked.

"Miss Martin? Of course. Isn't she a darling! She's father and mother to Beatrice. And she's so odd! We all adore her. Don't you?"

I willingly confessed to adoring Miss Martin, and very soon we moved back to the terrace where the others were

beginning to dance to the music of a victrola in the palm-room.

Of course I wrote to Beatrice that night, and mailed the letter immediately. Two days later my letter came back, marked by the postmaster, "Gone abroad." So it was as I had always believed it would be: Beatrice had gone back to Germany to marry Baron von Dreidorf.

My work in St. Louis was finished, my mission in America ended. I took the night train for New York and engaged passage on the *Lusitania*.

Leaning over the rail of the promenade deck watching the late arrivals on the dock, and thinking, not without some anxiety, of the German ambassador's warning in the morning paper (for what atrocity had the Germans not proved themselves capable of?), I suddenly saw alight from a taxi a plump little lady with gray hair and big tortoise-shell spectacles. She looked anxiously toward the steamer, as if afraid it might already have sailed.

My blood turned to ice, then raced through my veins at fever heat as I strained my eyes to see who would follow her out of the cab. Yes, it was Beatrice! Could my soul, projected through my eyes, compel her to look up? I half thought she was turning to look at me when some officious person on the dock handed her the morning paper, pointing out, I did not question, the ambassador's warning.

Beatrice read it hurriedly and showed it to Miss Martin. I could see, even from that distance, Miss Martin's look of horror. Men were removing her luggage from the taxi and hurrying it toward the boat. With a gesture she stopped them and apparently ordered them to return the luggage to the taxi.

I was in despair. They were not going! Very well; neither would I go. At that moment I caught Beatrice's eye and she became as one turned to stone at sight of me. I waved to her, but there was no time to stop and carry on a pantomimic conversation. The boat would sail in a very few minutes, the warning gong had already sounded, and if I was to get off, I must hurry.

I sprang away from the rail, ran along the deck, and plunged down the stairs toward the gangway. I ran fast, but the *Lusitania* is a big boat and before I was half way to the lower deck I felt the throb of the engines. I still hurried on, but by the time I reached the gangway it was raised, and a wide channel of water lay between the ship and the shore.

I could see some people on the dock still lingering for a last glimpse of their friends, but Beatrice and Miss Martin were not among them. They were gone!

For one desperate moment I thought of jumping overboard and swimming ashore. But that was folly. Even should I reach shore alive, what chance had I to find them? No, Beatrice was as irrevocably lost to me as if the earth had yawned and swallowed her up.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### MISS MARTIN'S SPY

**I** WAS the most unhappy man on the seven seas. It would do no good to go back by the pilot boat—for one moment I thought of doing so—for I should never be able to trace them again. I would find my cabin, shut myself up in it, and indulge my regrets to the full.

I turned—and found myself face to face with Miss Martin's tortoise-rimmed spectacles, and looking down into Beatrice's dark eyes dancing with amusement and joy!

"Wh-where did you come from? How did you get here?" I stammered, almost too overcome for words.

"Where did *you* come from?" Beatrice countered. "We thought you were still a prisoner in Germany."

"And when Beatrice saw you waving to us up there on deck, nothing would do but she must go aboard, *warning or no warning*," Miss Martin volunteered.

"Naturally. Would any woman in the world let such a mystery remain unsolved?" Beatrice defended herself, blushing delightfully. "Miss Martin was just as bad. Nothing could have kept her ashore after she caught that glimpse of you."

"That's *true*," admitted Miss Martin, without a sign



of a blush. "All the *ambassadors* in the world could n't have kept me ashore when I saw a chance to shake hands with *Captain Hatfield*. Ah-h! I 'm *so* sorry."

For by that time we had passed through a dark corridor and come out on deck and they had discovered my empty sleeve. Miss Martin seized my hand and squeezed it hard in sympathy, while Beatrice looked up at me with brimming eyes and murmured brokenly: "Oh, Hugh!"

I never before heard my name uttered in such divinely tender fashion, but their sympathy was too much for me.

"Yes," I said brusquely—I could not have spoken at all if I had attempted to speak gently—"The fortunes of war. I 'm down and out, you see."

"I see *nothing* of the kind!" retorted Miss Martin with equal brusqueness, but half laughing and half crying as she spoke. "You 're *up* and *on*. Up on a pedestal, where *we*, poor mortals, dare only gaze and *worship*."

Miss Martin's italics were delightful. They carried me back to happier days more completely than anything else could have done.

"How delightful!" I laughed. "Think of being worshipped by—"

"*Females*," interpolated Miss Martin promptly. We all three laughed, for which I felt thankful. I had been a little afraid that the shock was going to be too much for Beatrice. She had turned red and pale by turns, and was evidently struggling against tears. Now she openly dabbed at her eyes and said in a voice, a little tremulous at first, but rapidly brought under control:

"But how did you get here, Captain Hatfield? Did you drop from the skies?"

"It 's a long story, Beatrice. I owe my freedom and my life to you," I answered, speaking lightly. I did not want to arouse any more emotion, but I think she knew I was speaking from my heart.

"To me?" Beatrice exclaimed incredulously, and in the same breath Miss Martin cried: "*To Beatrice?* Dear *me*, that sounds interesting but impossible. If it 's a long story won't you wait, Captain Hatfield? I don't want to lose a *word* of it and we have to find our cabins and get settled. Have you your place at table?"

"The captain has asked me to sit at his table, but I would rather sit with you, if I may."

"How delightful! *We* are at the captain's table, too. He 's an old friend of mine; I *always* sit at his table. But come, Beatrice, don't you think we ought to find our cabins?"

"Don't go," I begged. "You must not miss this sail down the harbor; it 's the most wonderful in the world."

"Yes, Miss Martin, don't go; our cabins can wait," Beatrice added her plea to mine.

"All right. You *young* folks can stay, if you like; I 'll hunt up the cabins. But mind, not a *word* of that story, Captain Hatfield. You 'll have to tell it over again to *me*, if you tell it to Beatrice now."

I really think that hunting up her cabin was only a pretext on Miss Martin's part to leave Beatrice with me and allow me an opportunity to tell her my story. She is certainly the biggest-hearted little woman in the world, and I believe she likes me.

It was the work of a very few minutes to locate Beatrice's and Miss Martin's chairs and to have a steward place mine next them, and, since a fresh breeze was

blowing up the bay, tuck Beatrice in with her rug. She may have seen the beautiful islands and lovely shores we were sailing past, but as for me, I saw only Beatrice while I told her my story. She must have known, as I told it, how deeply in earnest I had been when I claimed that I owed my freedom and my life to her, though she would not for one moment admit the claim. She was greatly touched by Baron von Dreidorf's generosity.

"You owe your freedom and life to him," she said. "I always knew he was fine."

"Yes, I can never repay him, but—he did it for you, and he would not have known that I was a prisoner or tried to hunt me up except for you."

She could not contradict me, and I went on with my story. She shuddered over Keltowitch's part in it, as she had shuddered in Dresden and Leipzig at sight of him.

"I always knew he was horrible, Hugh, but I could not believe any man was so vile. How I loathe him!" she exclaimed vehemently.

And she was deeply interested in Witkowski's part in the story.

"I liked him in Leipzig," she said. "Oh, Hugh, how wonderful that you were able to save his life!"

I had not said that I had saved his life, and though I had dwelt on his risking his life for me, I had passed so lightly over anything that I had done for him that I could not see how she could have drawn any such conclusion, and I said so to her.

She smiled at me bewitchingly.

"I know you, Hugh. I have seen you act—and heard

your account of it afterward. I can read between the lines. Just wait until I hear Mr. Witkowski's version. It will sound very differently."

"Oh, Witkowski! He's the most extravagant little foreigner alive. You can't trust a word he says; that is, when it comes to praising a friend."

She only smiled obstinately, and I went on with my story.

"We were both in hospital, Witkowski and I, for a few weeks, and Harold and the 'governor' paid me a visit. Neither of them, however, knew anything of your whereabouts, and as soon as I was able I set about hunting you up, but could find no trace of you till this moment. Why did you hide your trail so carefully? Were you *afraid* I would find you?"

"Oh, no!" she disclaimed vehemently. "But you must know, Hugh, that I believed you were still a prisoner in Germany and I expected to be away from my work only a month. Miss Martin's business has kept her in America much longer than she supposed, and she would not let me go back without her. But if I had had any idea you were in France, I certainly would have written to my old hospital and to you, though I would not have known where to address you, I suppose."

Of course I had said nothing of the Victoria Cross or the Order of Leopold; I would allow Beatrice to hear of those honors from some one else. But I would have liked much to tell her of my meeting with Kitchener and King Albert, if I could have done so without referring to my promotion and decorations. Now it occurred to me that I might tell her about it in another way.

"You have not asked me how I happened to be in America," I said.

"No, but I have been wondering greatly. There have been so many questions to ask during your wonderful story that I had n't reached that one. How did it happen?"

I told her of being summoned to a council of warlords and of being questioned by Kitchener about the way the Germans treated their prisoners. And then how delighted I had been when Kitchener asked me to go to America to buy horses, because I felt sure I would find her in America. Lastly I told her how thrilled I was to meet Kitchener and how I was almost more thrilled at meeting King Albert.

"Did you really meet him? Did he speak to you?" she asked, eagerly, for Albert of Belgium was a hero to Beatrice, also.

"Yes, a few words," I answered.

"Oh, *what* did he say?" she persisted.

"Something kind and nice; I can't repeat his exact words," I evaded.

"I should have remembered every word to the day of my death," she reproached me. "You don't know how to be a hero-worshipper."

I thought I did, especially where those two were concerned, but I did not say so.

There was another thing I had not mentioned in the course of my story; I had said nothing about how I came to lose my arm. We were rapidly approaching Sandy Hook. We would soon leave the beautiful bay and the shores of America behind us, and I was feeling a little regret at the thought, when Beatrice turned to me

with more of timidity in her manner than I had often seen, but also with a look of divine pity in her eyes.

"Hugh," she hesitated, "you have not told me—perhaps you do not like to talk of it—but—if you do not mind—could you tell me how it happened?"

She laid her hand lightly, with a touch that was like a caress, on my empty sleeve.

I had never thought I would care to be pitied by any human being. I had shrunk from it as from some exquisite kind of torture whenever I had noticed a sign of it, even in my father or Harold. I do not know why it should have been different with Beatrice, but it was. I *loved* her pity, since there was no one else to witness it, and I told her of that October battle when my regiment held the ridge, of the shrapnel that felled me, and of the charge of the Uhlans that followed. I told her of hearing that wounded fellow bawling in such unmanly fashion, and then discovering it was myself in delirium, and I reminded her how she had excused the poor fellow I had thought such a baby for bawling in like fashion. And I told her of the Herr Geheimrath's goodness to me—she thought it as wonderful as I had thought it—and of his marriage to Fräulein Elsa; and of my finding Fräulein Marta a Red Cross nurse in my hospital. Lastly I told her how they had amputated my arm by guile, and how bitter I had been about it, for I had not believed, and did not yet believe, that it was absolutely necessary.

So enthralled had Beatrice seemed to be in listening, and so engrossed was I in the telling and in watching the play of emotions in her beautiful eyes, that we were as oblivious to the world tramping up and down the

deck past our chairs as if we two had been alone on the great ship now plowing its way out of the bay into the great ocean, leaping forward with throbbing eagerness as it plunged into the element it loved. But in the very act of uttering my bitterness I seemed to feel a compelling gaze. I looked up quickly and discovered a strange man leaning on the rail, looking intently first at Beatrice and then at me. He met my glance with a mumbled "Pardon," turned quickly away, and mingled with the throng of promenaders.

I did not know why I should feel uneasiness at so slight an incident, but I did feel a little uncomfortable. I had never seen the man, that I could recall, though there was something about him that struck me as vaguely familiar. I could not tell whether it was his walk or his figure—he was noticeably slender—or his close crop of red curls and drooping red mustache, or his eyes, which I thought were dark, though it was hard to tell through the blue glasses he wore to protect them from the glare. I rather felt it was his eyes that were familiar, and unpleasantly so. I had not liked the way he stared at us, though no doubt Beatrice's beauty would attract any stranger's glance, and perhaps our evident absorption in each other had been pronounced enough to draw this disagreeable notice. I resolved to be more discreet.

But Beatrice had not appeared to notice the stranger. She was looking at me with exquisite tenderness, and I was glad he had passed on into the crowd.

"You are not bitter any longer, Hugh?" she asked softly.

"Yes; I do not believe I will ever get over it."

"But I should think you would be *proud*. It's a finer decoration than the Victoria Cross. I know it must be a terrible inconvenience, but in time you will learn to manage. You must let us all help you."

"It's not the inconvenience. My two orderlies take the place of one hand very well. But—now I can never, no matter what success I win in diplomacy in the future, ask the woman I love to marry me."

I spoke with intense bitterness. It had surged over me once more in a flood of despair, as I realized, more exquisitely than ever before, her loveliness and her tenderness. And it was not for me.

"Why not?" she asked, still more softly. And as I was too startled by her question to reply for a moment, she went on, not lifting her eyes from her hands playing nervously with an orchid she had been wearing, that now lay crushed in her lap. The color came and went in waves as she spoke, low and hurriedly:

"If the woman you love is worthy of your love, she will love you all the better for that empty sleeve. And she will long to help you, to be a comrade to you—to be your lost hand and arm, to be everything to you. And she will not mind poverty, even if she once thought she would—not now—oh, *Hugh*, not *now*!"

At last she lifted her eyes, brimming with tears, to look bravely into mine.

"Beatrice!" I could not have uttered another word, even had there been time. Why had this avowal—the sweetest that ever fell on mortal's ears—been uttered in such a place, with laughter and talking going on all about us and where a stray glance might fall upon us at any moment?



But I had hardly breathed her name—it was barely more than a breath—when I was startled by some one coming to a standstill directly in front of my chair. I glanced up, annoyed at an interruption at such a moment. It was Corporal Hayes, one of my two orderlies, who stood at salute before me.

“Well, what is it?” I demanded impatiently.

“Captain Turner, sir, presents his compliments to Colonel Hatfield and begs him not to forget that he is to take luncheon at the *first* table.”

Sure enough, I had heard the bugle for luncheon some time before, but it had made no impression on me. I was inclined to send Corporal Hayes about his business, with a polite message to the captain, of course, but Beatrice threw back her rug and sprang to her feet.

“We are at the first table, too,” she exclaimed. “What will Miss Martin think of me? I wonder where our cabin is.”

“All right, Hayes. Tell Captain Turner I will be down in a minute,” I said to the orderly, and turned to offer my services to Beatrice in helping her find Miss Martin. But they were not needed. Sailing down the deck, her voluminous skirts and shawl-like wrap bellying in the breeze, came Miss Martin. She bore straight down on us.

“What do you *think*, Captain Hatfield,” she began, but Beatrice interrupted her:

“*Colonel* Hatfield, if you please, Miss Martin,” she said, glancing demurely at me.

“*Colonel!* Well, I *never!* Since when, please?”

“I don’t know,” answered Beatrice. “I have only this moment learned it from his orderly. But I rather

think it must have been when he had that interview with Lord Kitchener and King Albert."

"*Kitchener! King Albert!*" gasped Miss Martin, too much impressed to utter another word.

"You are good at guessing," I smiled down at Beatrice. "But Miss Martin, what was it you wanted to ask me?"

"Goodness gracious! What *was* it? I've forgotten entirely. Beatrice!" severely, "you should n't spring such news so *suddenly*. Oh, yes; I remember. *There's a German spy aboard!*" in a stage whisper.

"A spy! Good gracious! You alarm me, Miss Martin," I returned with the same mock excitement.

"Don't laugh; it's *true*, Captain—I mean *Colonel* Hatfield. I just met him."

"What does he look like?" "How do you know he is a spy?" Beatrice and I asked in concert.

"Don't you suppose I can tell a *spy* as far as I can see him?" demanded Miss Martin scornfully. "This is a real *stage* spy, with false mustache, wig and dark goggles."

"What kind of a wig?" I asked, and it required a little effort to speak carelessly. A queer excitement was taking possession of me.

"A red, curly one. Do you know him?"

"I've seen him, I believe," I answered. And whereas a moment before I had been ready to laugh at Miss Martin, I was sober enough now. For I could not shake off the vivid impression, augmented by Miss Martin's words, of those sinister eyes staring at Beatrice and me through their thick, blue glasses. Where had I seen them before?

## CHAPTER XXX

“THY COUNTRY SHALL BE MY COUNTRY”

**T**HERE could be no peace of mind for me while an interrupted conversation of such a nature hung over my head; yet for several reasons I began to be glad that it had been interrupted. One of these was that it gave me time to bring myself into a condition at least approaching sanity; for the state of mind in which Beatrice's avowal—it amounted to that—had left me could be likened to nothing less than delirium.

It was not until late in the afternoon of our third day out that I found myself alone again with Beatrice. I had made many efforts to get her to myself, but I think she must have been avoiding me, possibly from a feeling of embarrassment, for my efforts had all been futile. It was seldom that she occupied her deck-chair and if she did, Miss Martin was always planted firmly beside her. At other times, when she was to be found at all, it was usually with the Honorable Miss Ruthven and her brother, the young Lord Ruthven, who had been spending the winter in Florida for his health. I do not believe it was because she was particularly interested in these titled English people that she cultivated them so assiduously—I found them rather a bore myself—but I believe she was using them as a protection, a kind of *chevaux de frise*, against me.

But late in the afternoon of that third day out, pacing the decks disconsolately and catching no glimpse of Beatrice, I stopped for a moment to learn what was interesting so greatly a knot of people gathered where they could command a view of the steerage deck. Shouts of glee and bursts of laughter, echoed from above by the first-cabin passengers, were rising from the steerage, and I stopped a moment to look down over the shoulder of Lord Ruthven. I was appalled at my first glance. Could it be that Beatrice was making a spectacle of herself for the amusement of these people? For my eyes had lighted at once on her, the center of an eager group.

They were not laughing at Beatrice, however. She was arranging races, and other events, I suppose, and awarding prizes to the successful contestants. A three-legged race was on as I looked, and it was easy to account for the laughter. Partners were selected by lot, it seemed, and a very tall man was linked to a very short one; a perfect pincushion of a girl to a gazelle-like creature—a dozen couples, all tripping over each other, falling flat, and making desperate struggles to rise again in their eagerness to be the first to reach the goal. For the prizes were desirable—wrist watches, plainly set in leather, for both men and girls.

The children—I had never seen so many children and babies together as on that boat—were getting ready for their three-legged race, and Beatrice was hard at work tying the little ankles together when I started down to the steerage, determined that this time she should not evade me. Not that I would interrupt her work—a labor of love, I could see—but I would waylay her when

the work was over. Miss Martin and the Honorable Miss Ruthven were assisting in the distribution of prizes, and they could escort each other back to the promenade deck while I snatched away Beatrice.

But it was not so easily managed as I thought it would be. Two chubby little creatures, a boy and a girl, tripped each other up and lay wriggling on their fat little stomachs in futile efforts to get up, while the spectators in the steerage and from the deck far above shouted with laughter at their funny attempts. It was no laughing matter to the youngsters. They bawled lustily, and Beatrice ran to their assistance. Since all hope of the prize was lost, she untied them and set them upright. But they were not to be comforted. Mortification at being a laughing-stock and disappointment at losing their chance at the prizes,—dolls and picture-books this time,—kept their tears flowing, and their sobs gaining in volume, until Beatrice took them on her lap, an arm around each. She very soon had their tears dried by presents of boxes of candy, the little girl snuggling her head down on Beatrice's shoulder, and the boy smiling up at her fatuously.

It was a pretty picture. I would have given much for a kodak and snap-shot of it, but something impelled me at that moment to lift my eyes and I was angered beyond bounds at sight of a levelled camera in the hands of Miss Martin's "spy." He should not keep that picture; I would get Beatrice's permission to demand the film from him. In the meantime I was incensed that he should so much as dare to gaze at that Madonna-like picture, and I was immensely relieved to see Beatrice put down the youngsters, with a parting hug for each,

and proceed to award the prizes to the winners, distributing consolation boxes of candy to all the other children.

The races were over, and I was at Beatrice's side demanding that she come up on the boat-deck with me to watch the sunset.

"Sunset? Oh, I would love to!" she answered. "Only, do you think that you and the sunset could wait long enough for me to take a bath? They're dear little things, these children, but they *are* dirty, and I'm a bit uncomfortable. I won't be more than fifteen minutes."

She was promptness itself. In fifteen minutes we were comfortably seated in a secluded nook I had discovered, sheltered from the east wind which was blowing a gale and watching the clouds pile up in the west for a gorgeous sunset. That is to say, we were presumably watching them. As for me, I was watching Beatrice, and Beatrice could not possibly have watched anything with her downcast eyes.

"Beatrice," I said abruptly, "have you been trying to keep out of my way these past two days?"

"Oh, no," she declared, as if such an idea was preposterous, but I thought she was not entirely truthful in that statement.

"Do you think it was quite right to keep me in suspense after—you—"

"After I had proposed to you?" she finished my halting speech for me. But she did not sound very audacious. Her voice was low and trembled slightly, and she did not dare look up. She went on hurriedly: "Oh, Hugh, I don't see why I said what I did. How do I know that you still care? It's more than likely.

that you have met some one, perhaps some one here in America, whom you can love better, and who would be in every way more suitable."

I let her finish, partly because I could not help myself, she was so headlong in her speech. But I seized the first opening she gave me.

"Once for all, Beatrice," I began sternly, "you must understand that my love is not a thing of a few weeks or months; it is for all time. And there is no woman in the world who could ever be half so 'suitable.' But that is not the question. When I found myself a poor, mutilated creature I swore I never again would let myself think of loving you or asking you to marry me, even should prosperity come my way. Instead, I would try to forget you. I could not keep that last vow. I have thought of nothing but you during these long months, and I have been restless, unhappy, and unfit for duty, simply because I could not find you. I excused my restlessness to myself on the plea that it was my first duty to let you know that your efforts had given me freedom and life, but all the time I knew that my unrest was a terrible craving that nothing but the sight of you could appease. I seized on my commission to America with avidity, for I did not doubt that I would find you there. But though I never entirely gave up hope and never relaxed my efforts, hope began to be tinged with despair after months of vain attempts to discover you. Then I met Miss Warfield, got your address, and wrote you the same night, only to have my letter come back as all my other letters had done. Think of my joy after such despair when I saw you and Miss Martin arrive on the dock to sail on my steamer.

And my despair when I believed that the German ambassador's warning would keep you from sailing after all. I dashed down to the lower deck to get off the boat, but I was too late, and I came near jumping overboard and swimming ashore. To lose you now was more than I could bear. And finally to find you when I had at last given up all hope! Beatrice, I *cannot* give you up! To ask you to share the poverty of a poor, maimed, mutilated soldier may be weak and unmanly, but I do ask it. When this awful war is over will you marry me, Beatrice?"

My voice shook with eagerness, fear, and love. Somehow I had gained possession of her hand and was clinging to it as a drowning man clings to his last hope. I'm afraid I hurt her, but she would not wince, only looked up at me bravely with shining eyes.

I was so sure of her answer that when she said very softly, "No, Hugh," I sprang to my feet as one who had been shot, without waiting for what was to follow. But it was Beatrice who clung to my hand now and drew me down beside her again.

"No, Hugh, I will not wait for this awful war to be over," she said earnestly. "It may be years. Who knows? And I want the right to be with you in sickness, in health, in life, in—death."

No one can imagine how sweetly, how gently she spoke, or how solemnly. I could not take her to my heart, I would not there, where at any moment there might be a passerby, and all I could say over and over, brokenly, was, "Beatrice! Beatrice!"

Long we sat there hand in hand, while the gorgeous magnificence in the west paled to soft rose and the clear



green of chrysoprase. In that translucent sky hung the slenderest of crescents, a silver moon, and pendant from the tip of its lower horn swung the evening star, a blazing jewel. Never had there been so lovely a sunset since silver crescent and golden star were first hung in the evening sky, and I could not help feeling that it was a heaven-sent omen of the beauty and peace of the future in store for Beatrice and me.

After awhile we talked—of so many and such blessed things. And in the great peace that fell upon me, such a peace as I had not known in months,—had never known,—there came to me so keen a longing that the crushed and bleeding lands toward which we were swiftly sailing over quiet seas might know the joys of peace, that it seemed more than my soul could bear.

“Beatrice,” I said, “we are fast leaving behind us that land where, almost alone among the great nations of the world, peace dwells secure. When I think of it as I know it, so prosperous, so happy, I wonder if your countrymen realize how blessed they are among the nations of the earth. It is a land of happy homes, of kindly hearts, of smiling plenty. And with thousands of miles of ocean between it and unhappy, warring Europe, it seems to me its peace is impregnable.”

Beatrice’s eyes were shining; I think she loved to hear her country so spoken of.

“Sometimes, Hugh,” she said, “I wish it were your country, too. But we are kin, brothers in soul, and England cannot be wounded without America bleeding at heart.”

“I wonder,” I said slowly, “that you can bear to exchange this happy, golden America for poor, unhappy

England, and I almost wonder that I dare to ask you. Am I going to bring unhappiness upon you, Dearest?"

"I love my country, Hugh," she said simply and earnestly, "but I love your country, too; and from now on it shall be mine. The greatest unhappiness that could befall me would be to be forbidden to share any unhappiness that is coming to you."

For answer I took her two fragrant little hands and crushed them in my one strong one. Then I bent my head to raise them to my lips. But I was startled by her drawing them away suddenly, almost roughly.

I lifted my head, surprised and a little hurt, and encountered a malicious gleam through a pair of dark-blue goggles, and a sardonic smile beneath a drooping red mustache.

I did not remember ever having seen a mouth adorned with exactly such a mustache, but the sardonic smile was strangely familiar.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE SEVENTH OF MAY

THE next three days would have been bliss unalloyed, but for Miss Martin's spy. I did not know why he should be so deeply interested in Beatrice or me, or in both of us, but certainly it seemed to me that I never secured Beatrice to myself in some specially secluded retreat that he did not turn up at the most inauspicious moment. I began to have a haunted feeling; there was something uncanny about the man. And the exquisiteness of my happiness, the radiance of my joy, was tinged at times with a gray cloud of worry.

But only at times. Most of the hours sped on the wings of perfect bliss, with Beatrice the loveliest and sweetest fiancée a man ever had, and every doubt of my right to love and marry her thrown recklessly to the winds.

And Miss Martin proved herself the trump I had long known her to be. When I told her that Beatrice had promised to marry me and I hoped she was not sorry that she was to make so poor a match, she said, in the kindest possible way:

"I'm not one *bit* sorry, Colonel Hatfield. In fact, *Hugh*—you don't mind, do you? I've always wanted to call you '*Hugh*.' "

She gave me no time to tell her how much I liked it, but hurried on:

"In fact, Hugh, I am *very* glad. I like you best of them all. I always *did* want Beatrice to marry an Anglo-Saxon, and a *Britisher* is next best to a *Yankee*."

"Thank you, Miss Martin," I managed to interpolate, but got no further.

"And I don't mind telling you *now*," she hurried on, "that the day Beatrice is married I shall give her ten thousand pounds; only it will be in good American *dollars*, or rather, American securities."

Here she stopped a moment for breath, and I thought I could get in a word. But unfortunately I was so astounded at this announcement that before I could find my voice she was off again.

"And if she is going to live in *England*, she may as well sell her little *American* property. That will *surely* bring her in five thousand pounds more, so she won't be *absolutely* a portionless bride. I never told *any* one that I intended to give Beatrice anything; I did n't want her to be married for her *money*, you know. But I almost began to think I'd better tell *you*. You were so afraid of being *poverty-stricken*, and I did n't want Beatrice's heart *broken*."

"Why, Miss Martin!" I remonstrated. "You surely did not think me as mercenary as that!"

"No, I never did. Only I thought you weren't *willing* to ask Beatrice to share your poverty, and she was n't willing to be a *burden* to you, so between the *two* of you I began to think it was a *desperate* case and I would have to tell."

"Does n't Beatrice know?"

"Not yet."

"I'm glad."

“Why?”

“Because it proves to me that she loved me enough to face poverty with me.”

“And I suppose she ’ll be asking me if *you* knew, and saying *she* ’s glad for the same reason.”

In fact that was exactly what Beatrice did say, though she added she was glad for my sake that she need n’t be a burden to me. And just as soon as I could get over the little hurt to my pride, I was glad, too, that Beatrice could have the ordinary comforts and amenities of life, even if I was not the one to provide them for her.

A discovery I made on the afternoon of the sixth of May added somewhat to my feeling of uneasiness regarding Miss Martin’s spy. Going to my cabin, a little late, to dress for dinner, I came face to face with the blue goggles coming out of the cabin next to mine. Could it be possible that the man was actually keeping me under surveillance, and had selected his cabin accordingly? I was glad it was I he was watching, not Beatrice. But could Miss Martin’s jest have more truth in it than any of us suspected? Was it possible the man really was a spy? I decided it might at least be worth while to speak to the captain about him, and have a detective detailed to keep an eye on him until his antecedents and business in England could be investigated.

But I found no opportunity to speak to the captain that night. There was only one topic at the dinner-table. We were approaching the danger zone, and every man and woman on the ship, passengers and crew alike, I have no doubt, was feeling a thrill of excitement. The captain had steadily laughed at the idea that the Germans would torpedo a passenger-boat. Even the Ger-

mans, as he put it, could not so disregard every law of civilized warfare. The ambassador's warning was, no doubt, merely a ruse of the German steamship lines to divert travel from the Cunard line. Since they were out of the running themselves, they would do everything possible to interfere with the Cunard Company, of which they always had been insanely jealous.

The captain's explanation tended to soothe the fears of the more timorous, but there were some of us who could not believe that so dignified an official as an ambassador would lend himself to such a means for such a purpose. If he had found it necessary to utter a warning, it was because there was good ground for fear. Our confidence lay in the fleetness of the *Lusitania* and the skill of her captain, rather than in the *Kultur* of the Germans.

Beatrice and I sat on deck late that night. I don't know whether it was in her thoughts—it lay always in the background of mine—that this might be our last evening on earth together. I almost think it was in hers, too, for had we each known that this was to be a farewell, our talk could not have been more truly that of one soul speaking to another. It will always dwell in my memory as a wonderful evening, tinged with a sadness that made it but the sweeter.

It was near midnight when I said good-night to her at her cabin-door and groped my way through darkened corridors to my own. As I entered it quietly, since it was late, and went forward to close my port-hole before turning on my light, as we had been instructed to do, a gleam from the port-hole next to mine caught my eye. I was angered at such open violation of strict

orders, for all we knew putting the whole ship's company in peril, and without stopping to think who occupied the next cabin, or whether I had any right to speak, I rapped on the partition and called sharply:

"Close your port-hole!"

The light went out instantly—turned off, for there was no sound of closing a port. I closed mine and turned on my light, for a time forgetting the incident in thoughts of Beatrice.

I had been in bed a long time, just how long I do not know, my lights turned off and port-hole open, thinking of Beatrice, recalling every word and incident of that wonderful evening with her. I was so wide-awake it was as if my eye-lids were propped open, there was no hint of sleep in them. I was beginning to think it was time there should be when I suddenly caught a gleam once more from the port-hole next door. This time I was thoroughly angry. I sprang from my bed and rapped on the partition. The light went out instantly, but I shouted fiercely through my open port:

"What do you mean? I will inform the captain and have you arrested if I catch another glimmer from your room!"

An answer came back, in a gruff voice that I believed to be disguised, but that could not wholly hide its foreign accent:

"I am ill. I must have light; I must have air."

"If you are ill," I shouted back not much mollified, for ill or well he had no right to endanger the lives of other passengers, "if you are ill, I will call the doctor; but close your port-hole before you turn on your light."

The answer came hurriedly, and I believe the man spoke with some trepidation :

“No, do not call the doctor; it is not necessary. I am better, much better. I will close my port.”

I could hear him shutting it and I went back to bed. But lying there, wider awake than ever and trying to decide whether the man had honestly been ill or had a sinister purpose in allowing his light to shine through the port-hole, it suddenly occurred to me that there had been something unusual in that light. It was not the steady, diffused glow that would naturally fall from a port-hole; it was more of a far-reaching beam, and it moved, like a small search-light. I do not know why this had not struck me at the time; I suppose because I was so engrossed with thoughts of Beatrice. The remembrance of it now caused me no small uneasiness—I should have investigated.

I now recalled, too, that the light had come from the cabin of Miss Martin's spy. Why had I been so negligent? I was tempted, even yet, to call my neighbor up and inquire why he should be using a light of that kind, but the fear of disturbing an innocent man, who, perhaps was already buried in sleep, or possibly the greater fear of subjecting myself to ridicule as an unwarranted Paul Pry, deterred me. I determined, however, to keep watch, and should that light appear again, no considerations of delicacy would restrain me from making a thorough investigation or informing some officer of my suspicions.

But the light did not appear again, and with the first gray of the early dawn I allowed myself to fall into trou-



bled sleep. When I awoke it was late; it was necessary to hurry if I would be in time to eat breakfast with Beatrice. I would have no time now for that morning walk, pacing the decks, that I had heretofore regarded almost as much of a religious necessity in my preparation for breakfast as my morning bath.

And such a morning! An opaline sea shot with gleams of silver and gold, and an argosy of fleecy white clouds lazily sailing in the high vault of a sapphire sky. Why had I not risen in time for a walk with Beatrice while the May morning was still fresh and lovely?

Entering the dining-room I met my next-door neighbor coming out, and was struck by his haggard countenance. Then perhaps he really had been ill. He gave me a furtive look as he passed, but neither of us bowed. I could not bring myself to do so, and I believe he did not dare. Lying awake through those long hours I had arrived at the conclusion that, although his light had not appeared again, I nevertheless would ask the captain to have my neighbor watched. If he was innocent, it would do no harm; if he should prove to be a spy, as I now more than half believed him to be, it would be a precaution well taken.

Every one had left the table by the time I reached my seat; that is, all except the captain, who had come down late, and Miss Martin and Beatrice, who were also tardy. It was my opportunity, and I told the captain of my suspicions and also of the mysterious light that had, at least twice during the night, appeared at my neighbor's port-hole. For all I knew it might have been shining there during the whole evening up to twelve o'clock, the hour when I went to my cabin.

My words produced the first evidence of temper I had seen in Captain Turner. He fairly roared with rage at any one daring to turn on lights, and twice, too, when his orders had been so explicit. He calmed down sufficiently to thank me for my warning and excused himself almost immediately to appoint what he called a "follower" for the man.

Miss Martin was almost ludicrously excited.

"*There!*" she exulted. "Did n't I *say* I could tell a spy as far as I could see him? But do you *really* think, Colonel Hatfield, that he *is* one?"

"No; I only think it's well to be on our guard," I answered.

"Dear *me*, I hope they won't *shoot* him. Poor fellow!" she sighed, her sympathy instantly veering to the person in trouble.

"There's no danger of that," I assured her. "We English don't shoot a man until we've given him a chance for his life. He has to be proved guilty."

Whereupon Miss Martin veered to another subject, with her usual abruptness.

"Have you noticed, Colonel Hatfield, how fast we're going? Do you suppose that's because we're in the war zone?"

I had noticed it, but had not spoken of it for fear of alarming Miss Martin and Beatrice. Since Miss Martin was already a little uneasy, as one could discover from her manner, I made as light of it as possible.

"Very likely. Shall we go up on deck and watch for periscopes?"

We were not the only ones on deck watching for periscopes. A more perfect day could hardly be

imagined, or one with smoother seas and softer breezes. So swiftly were we moving that one had almost the sensation of flying through sun-lit air. It would have been pure bliss, with England and a safe harbor less than twenty-four hours ahead of us, if it had not been for the uneasy feeling that sent first one passenger and then another hurrying to the rail with an excited, "What was that?" as some strange object, perhaps the fin of a porpoise, perhaps a bit of flotsam, flashed for a moment above the waves.

Beatrice disappeared after awhile, and I did not see her again until luncheon. She had been down in the steerage, she said, visiting Georgie and Nancy, the chubby twins who had missed out in the race.

"Beatrice goes down to see them every morning," Miss Martin spoke accusingly.

"I've lost my heart to them," Beatrice confessed; "and they have the nicest mother. Their daddy's a soldier, and their mother is taking them over to England, so that they can be near him."

"Would n't it be *terrible* if anything happened to the ship, Colonel Hatfield?" Miss Martin queried anxiously. "Do you *know*, there are at least *forty* babies aboard; little tots, under a year?"

"Nothing will happen," I said; but I noticed the captain seemed distraught, and I was not altogether at ease in my own mind. We had perceptibly slowed down from our fast pace of the morning, and when Miss Martin, with her usual audacity, ventured to ask why, the captain did not resent the question or ignore it, as he might have done had it come from some less favored passenger. He told her we had passed Fastnet and ought to be rea-

sonably safe from the Germans, and that the haze along the Irish coast was a greater menace than a submarine.

Nevertheless I was not altogether convinced that the captain felt as secure as his words indicated. His manner seemed to belie them, and he ate hurriedly and left us before we had half finished our luncheon,—to go up on the bridge, he said.

It must have been nearly two o'clock when I piloted Miss Martin and Beatrice to seats on the boat-deck. We were on the port side and since this side commanded a broad reach of the channel, several others had taken their stations there with the avowed purpose of watching for periscopes. We amused ourselves by watching the watchers, and were especially interested in two young fellows standing by the rail near us. They looked like college men, and were youthfully eager in their quest. A little farther down the deck, near one of the life-boats, stood Miss Martin's spy. He, too, was evidently looking for periscopes, but also keeping a furtive eye on Beatrice and me. Not far away a steward was busying himself about the deck, doing nothing much that I could discover, but, I felt certain, keeping Miss Martin's spy under surveillance. I rather thought the spy knew he was being followed, but did not care—which looked like innocence.

I am not sure that Miss Martin and Beatrice were aware of this chain of watchers, but the presence of her spy suggested to Miss Martin a theme we had touched upon more than once during the course of the voyage.

"I suppose," she said, with a little nod toward the man by the life-boat, "if he is a spy, he is actuated by motives of the *purest* patriotism. Do you know, I rather

think the Germans are ahead of you British in that. It strikes *me* that the whole German nation is moving as a *unit* in this war, while you *British* are half the time at sixes and sevens."

Beatrice seemed to feel that in some way I was being arraigned by Miss Martin's speech. She was quick to spring to my defense.

"Oh, Aunt Hester!"—I had noticed she called Miss Martin "Aunt" when she felt the occasion permitted the more intimate title—"think of the splendid devotion of the British officers and the thousands who have gone to their death in the front ranks."

"And very foolish of them, too!" responded Miss Martin drily. "I don't call it a wise sort of courage to expose yourself *recklessly*. But I'm not speaking of the upper classes; they have always been *splendidly* devoted and brave."

"But the Tommies are brave, too; no soldiers in the world have shown finer dash and courage. I know, for I've seen them under fire," Beatrice insisted rather indignantly.

"Yes, I know. I'm not questioning their *courage*. I'm merely saying that there ought to be *more* of them. Why doesn't the *whole* British nation rise as one man to volunteer? I don't suppose there's an able-bodied *German* of suitable age who is not doing his duty cheerfully in the ranks."

"That isn't fair, Aunt Hester. It's due to their system of compulsory service. It's because of that militarism we are always finding fault with."

"A very good system when it comes to *war*," said

Miss Martin, laconically. "But I think there's something more to it. I believe the German lower classes are more *intelligent*, better *taught*, than the British. They are *trained* to patriotism. Their system of military service is an education. Besides, they're better *fed*. German militarism has some redeeming virtues; it looks after its citizens in time of *peace* to see that they are well-nourished, so that the men it must depend upon for the rank and file in time of *war* shall be men of muscle and decent stature, not anemic little runts like so many of the English soldiers."

"Aunt Hester!" Beatrice began to expostulate, but was too shocked for the moment to go on.

"*You* don't mind, Hugh, *do* you?"

"Aunt Hester" turned to me with the winning smile that always made her old face beautiful.

"Not a bit," I smiled back at her. "In fact, I rather agree with you, and I've been enjoying this 'Battle of the Amazons.' I—"

But I went no further.

"A periscope!" shouted one of the two young men on watch.

"A torpedo!" shouted the other the next moment.

Every one sprang to the rail at the first call, Miss Martin, Beatrice, and I with the rest. We were in time to catch a glimpse of a long streak of white rushing through the water toward us. It was instantly followed by the shock of impact. The great ship seemed to stand still for a moment, shuddering from stem to stern; and every man and woman on board shuddered with her.

Like the great ship, for one moment we, too, stood still,

dazed beyond action. Then as realization followed like a rushing tide, I said with what calmness I could command:

"We must have life-belts. Stay here; I will get them."

The crew, without waiting for orders, had sprung from their stations, and every man was rushing to his appointed life-boat as I started for the belts. But I was called back by an agonized cry from Beatrice.

"Let go! Let go! O *Hugh!*"

I turned quickly. Miss Martin's spy had hold of Beatrice's arm and was dragging her toward the life-boat by which he had been standing. The crew were already lowering it from the davits and into it men and women were beginning to crowd.

I sprang back to Beatrice's side and struck off the man's hand with an angry exclamation. He paid no attention to me, except to bestow a black scowl upon me, but in labored English, with a strong German accent, urged Beatrice excitedly:

"Come, Miss Ludlow! We must be quick! The boat is filling. I will save you."

For answer Beatrice turned to me and seized my hand.

"Hugh, send him away!" she implored, and I could feel her trembling violently.

"I will look after Miss Ludlow and Miss Martin. Be off with you!" I ordered. But the man lingered long enough to urge once more:

"It is your only chance, Miss Ludlow. Come!"

Beatrice simply clung the tighter to me, and I had to whisper in her ear, "Let go one moment, dearest."

She dropped my hand instantly, and I sprang toward

the fellow. But the threat in my eyes and my raised fist were enough. He turned and ran toward the life-boat. Roughly pushing aside a woman about to step into it, he made a leap for a place in it.

But the steward who had been ordered to watch him, and who now was helping women and children into the boat, was too quick for him. As the man made his spring, the steward gave him a violent push that sent him careening headlong into the water. His head struck the edge of the ship as he went over, smashing his goggles and tearing off his red wig and mustache before he made the great plunge.

For a moment we three stood gazing after him, bewildered and awe-struck at the sudden end of the man. In that moment he rose to the surface and gazed wildly up at the boat, struggling desperately, but apparently not knowing how to swim.

"Oh, I knew it!" Beatrice moaned. "I knew it was he the moment he touched me. O Hugh!" She clung to me again, shuddering violently. For that struggling, agonized figure, with the black hair, the sinister eyes, and the cruel mouth of Keltowitch, uttering wild ravings, as we could guess from the contortions of the lips, quickly sank once more and forever beneath the waves.

We had lost precious minutes while we watched, spell-bound, the dying struggles of the man. Now, as we turned away, we found the life-boat on our side of the ship already filled and being lowered to the water. In those few moments the ship had begun to list heavily to starboard. It would be impossible to lower another boat on the port side, nor indeed was it certain that this one would reach the water in safety. Moreover, the pas-



sengers, who at first had not seemed to realize their peril, now that the list grew every moment more perceptible began to give way to panic.

I hurried the two women to the other side of the boat, securing life-belts and adjusting them as we went, but by the time we reached the starboard boats they, too, were rapidly filling. There had been no word spoken by any of the three during that quick walk and swift adjustment of life-belts; now as I put Miss Martin in the boat and started to help Beatrice in, saying no word of good-by for fear of startling her, a sudden suspicion assailed her.

"You are coming too, Hugh?"

"No," I answered, "not in this boat. Women and children first."

"Then I do not go either," she said quietly, and stepped quickly back.

I was in despair.

"You would not have me save myself at the expense of some poor woman, Beatrice?"

"No; I would rather you died, and I will die with you."

"And kill Miss Martin?"

For Miss Martin was frantically struggling with a sailor who was trying to make her keep her seat, calling: "Let me out! I *will* not go one *step* without Beatrice!"

I could see the terrible struggle Beatrice was going through between duty and love; between the devotion and grateful affection of years for Miss Martin and this new, absorbing love. Her eyes were agonized in the



"We will meet again, Beatrice. Do not doubt it for a moment"



strain of trying to decide for life with one, or a sweeter death with the other. I added quickly, hoping it would help her to a decision:

"Alone, I may have some chance for my life; there will be none if I must try to save you and Miss Martin, too."

It sounded heartless, cowardly; my whole soul revolted at the words, but they did their work. Miss Martin was already stepping from the boat, the sailor had yielded to her entreaties, but Beatrice called to her imperiously: "Go back, Aunt Hester; I am coming!" Then she turned quickly to me, put up her arms, drew down my head, and kissed me. I held her close, and our first kiss, our first caress, had little of the passion of lovers' kisses, only the intensity and tenderness of farewells between those whose love is stronger than passion and who, about to die, salute each other.

"Hugh, you will *try* to save yourself?" Beatrice whispered brokenly.

"With all my strength. I have everything to live for. We will meet again, Beatrice. Do not doubt it for a moment."

"In life and in *death*, Hugh, I am yours." Her arms were about my neck, her head was thrown back, her eyes looking into mine with such mingled tenderness and love and anguish in their dark depths, swimming with tears, that it was with difficulty I could answer her.

"Here, and in the great Beyond, we belong to each other, Beloved."

I crushed her to my heart, felt her arms tighten con-

vulsively about my neck and her lips cling to mine, and then tore myself free and blindly hurried her into the boat. It was not a moment too soon.

Tears were streaming from dear Miss Martin's eyes as she gathered Beatrice into her arms and waved me farewell.

"Good-by, Hugh! Dear, *dear*, Hugh!" she called between sobs.

It was a homely kind of grief, but her red nose, her swollen eyes, her whole disfigured countenance, looked sweet and dear to me, though I could hardly spare a moment from my darling's grief-stricken face to look at it.

"To our meeting again!" I called, as cheerfully as I could, and waved my hat as the boat reached the water and they passed beyond the sound of my voice. I watched them as they rowed away, still waving in response to a white hand waving to me, and wishing with all my soul that those rowers would hurry, for the list was gaining terribly; any moment the ship might take its plunge, and if they were not far enough away, they would be drawn under. My God! *Why* did they not hurry!

But the panic was increasing about me every instant as the ship listed more heavily and it began to be evident that it would be impossible to rescue everybody. Women with children clinging to them begged me to save them. I did what I could, but there was little I could do except assist them into life-belts, for officers and sailors were controlling the boats.

Yet when I heard a heartrending cry close at my side—

"Sir, is there no help for me? Must my babies drown?" I turned quickly to find Beatrice's little friends, Georgie and Nancy, in their mother's arms, their round rosy faces pressed tight against her white, drawn one and I determined if there was any possible way I would save the three. It was partly for their soldier father's sake that I would save them, but more, I knew, for Beatrice. I took the boy from his mother and made a way for them through a throng of men crowding around a nearly filled boat.

"Make room for a soldier's wife and his children!" I called to the officer in charge of the boat.

"There's only room for one more," replied the officer, not unkindly.

"I will only take the room of one, sir. I will hold the children," the woman cried desperately.

"All right! Get aboard, and be quick!" shouted the officer, and I hustled the woman with Nancy in her arms into the boat, pitching Georgie in after them, as the boat shot down into the water.

My heart was lighter after I had seen them safely off. Beatrice and "Aunt Hester" were safe; I could wait for the end calmly.

"This is the Great Adventure," I heard a voice say near me. The quietly spoken words struck my ear and I turned sharply. I did not know the man; he was talking to a man and a woman, but it seemed to me wonderful that any one facing almost certain death could speak of it so calmly and view it in such a light. Then in a flash it came to me: It is the Great Adventure! In a few minutes we all may know what no living man can

possibly know—what lies beyond the curtain. And a strange excitement began to drive out the fear and anguish that had been gripping my heart.

I glanced up at the bridge. There stood Captain Turner, ready to go down with his ship, and I thrilled at the thought. The Great Adventure! I caught his eye and waved to him. He shouted back to me with the voice of a stentor: "Jump! The time has come!"

The captain knew. But for a moment a wild desire to go down with the ship, like the captain on his bridge, possessed me. Then I remembered Beatrice and my promise, "With all my strength I will try to save myself."

I hurriedly drew off boots and coat and prepared to jump. But I had waited too long—that moment of indecision had been my one chance, and I had lost it.

That awful shriek! The mingled cries of babies, children, men and women, rose in one titanic wail of despairing agony as the ship plunged down. Then a great silence. No human cry, only the sound of rushing waters. I dare not think of it—that awful shriek, that awful silence. There would be no joy left in life if I let myself dwell upon it.

How does it feel to drown? I know. "Beatrice! God!" I whispered, closing my eyes, and held my breath as I felt the icy waters rise around me and the whole Atlantic pouring down upon me. Down, down, down, for interminable ages I sank; sometimes quietly, sometimes whirled and tossed by the rushing waters, thinking only two thoughts, saying only two words over and over—"God! Beatrice!" Then suddenly I felt a new sensation. I was no longer sinking; I was rising.

Up, up, up, for other interminable ages. I still was holding my breath, though with infinite pain, but there came a moment when no possible exercise of will-power could control it an instant longer. I opened my eyes. My head was above water; by some inexplicable miracle I was saved.

Saved for the time. My eyes were on a level with a wide waste of water. It was strewn with débris from the ship, with here and there a man struggling in the water, and in the distance many small boats. At the last moment before the ship went down I had given my life-belt to a woman who was frantically calling for one when none was at hand. But I was a strong swimmer, even with my one arm, and there were chairs and tables and loose planks floating not far away. I must husband my strength—that terrible experience of being sucked down in the whirlpool of the *Lusitania's* grave had nearly exhausted me—and a raft could hardly have been better for my purpose than the table I secured, evidently swept from the café on the boat-deck.

I believed it would be only a matter of a short time before some of those boats in the distance would pick me up, if I could manage to keep afloat, but hours passed and no boat came near me. Those I had first seen were the life-boats, crowded to their gunwales and making for shore. If I could keep them in sight I might, perhaps, by alternate swimming and resting on my table, swim all the way to shore, if no boat came to pick me up.

But it was slow work, swimming and pushing the table before me, and I did not dare let the table go. I was terribly handicapped, also, by having only one arm.



If I could have pushed the table with one arm and used the other for swimming, it would have been comparatively easy, but I must cling to the table with my one arm and could only use my feet for swimming. I made but slow progress and the life-boats soon passed out of sight. It was dangerous to attempt to swim with nothing to guide my course, and I decided to wait, resting on my table-raft, knowing that it could not be long before the rescue boats would appear in answer to the *Lusitania's* wireless signals.

Floating thus, for all I knew directly above the great ship lying fathoms below me, I looked down and could almost have sworn I saw it resting quietly in its grave, bearing its priceless freight of strong men and tender women with babies clasped close in their arms, all pale in death and at peace in the quiet sleep that knows no waking.

And seeing them thus, more vividly in my mental vision than I could have seen them with my bodily eyes, I knew that the most appalling crime of all the ages had been committed on that beautiful May day. It was a crime the world could never forget and would be slow to forgive. A crime that would leave an indelible stain upon the honor of a great people who, until this day, had held an honorable place among the world's great nations. The tears that welled slowly to my eyes, the uncontrollable groan of anguish that burst from my lips, were not entirely for the slain innocents lying far below me, calm in death. They were partly for the slain honor of a great nation whose people I had loved, whose friendship I had been proud to own, whose hands, though the

hands of foemen on the battle-field, I had never, until this awful day, hesitated to take.

I think these thoughts must have held me engrossed for a long while. I was aroused by the realization that my limbs were growing numb from long inaction in the cold water. I must swim anywhere, in any direction, if only to restore circulation. I had been so sure of being picked up after a time that I had felt little uneasiness about my fate. Now, as I once more scanned the wide waste of water, I saw that while I had been resting some imperceptible current must have been bearing me along. I was no longer near any of the others whom I had first noticed struggling and swimming in the water near me. A vast expanse of water lay between me and the nearest dark dot that I thought must be a human being. But I could see that rescue boats were beginning to arrive, probably trawlers, and already were picking up the human derelicts. I must swim for it if I would not be overlooked.

But what had happened to me I did not know. Whether it was entirely due to numbness from the cold water, or whether in that whirling rush downward with the *Lusitania* I had received some blow that disabled me, I could not tell, but struggle as I might my legs and feet refused to move, or moved so feebly that I could never hope to reach anywhere by such slow means of propulsion. Then I tried to shout, but the feeble wail I uttered could scarcely have been heard fifty feet away.

What was the matter with me? And whereas, until this moment, I had been resting in careless security, I now began to struggle desperately with the only result,

so far as I could judge, to rapidly exhaust my little remaining strength. But I would not despair. My remembered promise to Beatrice gave me courage. With all my strength I would try to save myself.

For long hours I kept up my feeble struggles, never allowing myself for one moment to despair, sure that from the deck of one of the boats now thronging to the rescue, some friendly eye, eagerly scanning the water for signs of life, would discover me. I kept up my efforts at swimming, and at intervals lifted my voice in that futile wail, but all to no effect.

It began to grow dusk; lights here and there glimmered on the boats. A terrible sense of exhaustion overwhelmed me and I was seized by an uncontrollable desire to sleep. I well knew that should I yield to it, it would be my last sleep, but that thought had now no terrors for me. For greater security I thrust my arm through the open space in the table where a drawer had once been, and with a sigh of content let my head fall on the table's top.

"Good-night, Beatrice," I murmured, and sank swiftly into blissful, dreamless unconsciousness.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### CONQUEST

**F**OR ten minutes, or so it seemed to me, I rested in the peace of this delicious nirvana. And then some power against which my whole soul rebelled began to drag me up, slowly and painfully, from the deep well of oblivion.

I fought against it. I wanted to sink back into forgetfulness, into that profound peace more wonderful, more exquisite than all the restless activities of life. But the power was stronger than my will, and steadily, remorselessly I returned to consciousness.

I gradually became aware of a murmur of voices from a great distance, and then of the sensation of light on my closed eyelids, where before there had been only a heavy weight of blackness. They were still heavy; I did not want to try to lift them, but that same remorseless power that against my will was dragging me up to the surface from the deep, dark well whose peace I loved, compelled me to struggle to open them.

My first gaze was utter blankness. I do not think I saw at all, or what I saw made no impression upon me. Then, as memory began to waken, I knew that my eyes should be resting upon a wide waste of waters. This, then, was a dream and I was still asleep.

I was interested in my dream, and glad to be still asleep and dreaming. For instead of that cold and

dreary waste of waters, I saw a white room, a sweet-faced nurse, a doctor with kind eyes, and, sitting by my bed, his head resting on his hand and gazing at me with sorrowful eyes, my father, many years older than when I had seen him last.

Perhaps this was not a dream; perhaps this was the Great Beyond. Perhaps I had passed through the portals of death and this was the beginning of the new life. It was not as I had ever pictured it, but what mortal could picture immortality? How far from the reality must all our dreams of the future be!

But whether I was in Heaven or in a dream, I would essay to speak.

"Dad," I said weakly, and was amazed at the sound. When had I ever called my dignified father "Dad" since boyhood days? Was I again a little boy? Was that the form in which I was beginning this new life?

But at the word a wonderful transformation took place in that sorrowful figure sitting at the foot of my bed. A great joy irradiated his face. "My boy!" "My boy!" he uttered again and again, as he clasped my hand in his trembling old ones.

I began to believe that this was no dream, yes, and no vision of the Great Beyond. This was my father in the flesh, though much older and more broken than I remembered him, and these were flesh-and-blood people that stood around my bed and reflected my father's joy in their kind faces.

And now a new face was beside theirs, one that I had loved in the old days; a slender, boyish figure with love and joy shining through tears in eyes that were wont to twinkle with merry humor.

"Vincent!" I cried, and "Hugh!" he answered. That was all, for my father still held my hand, and though for a moment I feared Vincent, in his foreign fashion, was going to kiss me there before them all, he did not. I suppose a certain awe of my stately father deterred him.

As my brain gradually cleared and memory grew stronger, what I had received without question at first began to seem incredible to me. How could I be lying in that white room in a hospital when my remembrance was of going to sleep on my table-raft on the great Atlantic only a few minutes before?

They explained it all to me. I had been picked up for dead by a trawler's boat and brought to Queenstown three days before. Some one had identified me there, and my father had been summoned. The paralysis that had so numbed my limbs and finally reached my brain, the surgeon explained, must have been from the combined effects of some blow and long exposure in the cold water. It was only temporary, and had already yielded in a large measure to treatment; it would probably be only a matter of a few days until I had recovered entirely.

I had listened to these explanations with what calmness I could muster, but my nerves were atingle with excitement.

"Who identified me?" I demanded.

"A little old lady with big, tortoise-rimmed spectacles, and a beautiful young lady," the doctor answered.

"Thank God!" I breathed. "They are safe.

"Where are they?" I demanded again.

"They would not give their names and we do not know," the doctor replied.

"But they have come back many times to inquire how you are doing," the nurse volunteered. "They will certainly call this morning."

"Do they never come in to see me?"

"They did at first," the nurse hesitated, "but not since the earl's arrival."

Keen anxiety was depicted on my father's countenance during this brief conversation, and intense excitement on Vincent's. Now, unable to restrain himself longer, Vincent burst forth:

"Were Miss Martin and Miss Ludlow on the *Lusitania*?"

"Yes, and they are safe, thank God!" I answered. "Vincent, will you see them the next time they call and bring them to me?"

"I will, Hugh," he answered firmly enough, but with a slight glance at my father, as if he was not sure that this arrangement would be wholly pleasing to him.

"Who are Miss Martin and Miss Ludlow?" my father asked, with visibly forced composure.

"Miss Martin, Father," I answered, holding his hand with a closer pressure, "is one of the best women in the world,—an American. And Beatrice Ludlow, her ward, is the woman I love. She has promised to marry me."

I had spoken gently, for I was afraid my words would bring sorrow to my broken old father. But there was no help for it; the announcement had to be made. My father winced as I spoke, as if he had received a blow on a spot made tender by repeated blows. There was an intense silence around my bed as the earl struggled hard for self-control. But in vain. Suddenly he bowed his head over my hand, still clasped in his, and bathed

it with the hard and bitter tears of old age, murmuring brokenly in tones of anguish, "My boy! my boy! O my son! my son!"

At sight of his anguish, so much deeper than I had dreaded, a sudden fear gripped my heart.

"Where is Harold?" I asked, hardly above a whisper.

I believed I had reason for my fear. For the first few weeks after going to America I had heard from Harold constantly—gay letters, full of courage and pride, and occasionally a voluntary reminder, "I am keeping my promise, Hugh." Then the letters grew less frequent, at longer and longer intervals, grumbling instead of courageous, irritable instead of gay, and there was no reference any more to his pledged word. Through the last two weeks of my stay I had had no word from him, and I had been obsessed by many fears. Yet I was little prepared for the answer to my whispered, "Where is Harold?"

No one spoke for a moment. Then, with a convulsive sob and a groan that seemed to rend his heart, my father uttered a great cry:

"Oh, Hugh! *You* are the Viscount Dartmoor! You will soon be the Earl of Hatfield!"

Even yet I cannot dwell on the anguish of that bitter cry. It pierced my heart like a sword. Why had not I been taken, and my splendid Harold, my father's idol, left? I did not then understand all the bitterness of that cry. I did not know that no soldier's laurels were laid upon Harold's grave; that he had not given his life in some splendid deed of daring for his country; that he had lost it, thrown it away, by riding to hounds with a party of gay officers when he was too far under the



influence of liquor to control his horse; that he had been thrown on a pile of sharp rocks and never breathed again. When I learned the sad tale, weeks later, I cursed in my heart this awful war, those loathsome trenches, that deadly monotony that drove brave fellows, gallant souls, to seek relief in shameful drinking. I never can be reconciled to it. The brightest, bravest, noblest spirit the world ever knew had been debased and destroyed! My beautiful, proud brother!

But that bitterness was spared me then. It was enough to know that my idolized brother was dead, and to feel that in his heart my father could hardly forgive me because it was not I who had perished.

"Oh, my father," I groaned in bitterness of spirit, "would to God I could have died in Harold's stead and spared you this sorrow!"

But at that my father roused himself. Lifting a tear-stained, anguished face to heaven, he spoke solemnly:

"Hugh, I have this day to be thankful that I am not bereft in my old age; that I have a son left me of whom I can be proud, a son who will carry down the name we both love, without a stain, to future generations."

I could only answer by a harder grip of his hand. How could I bear at such a moment to add a new sorrow to his burdened heart, for well I knew his plans for Harold. The proudest blood of England was none too good for Harold's wife, for the wife of the future Earl of Hatfield.

In the midst of my distress, deeply pondering what word of comfort I could utter to my father and yet hold firm to my claim on Beatrice, a messenger announced to the nurse that Miss Martin was in the waiting-room.

With a nod to the nurse and a smile to me, without a word Vincent turned and followed the messenger. In five minutes he was back again, but without Miss Martin or Beatrice.

"Where are they?" I demanded sternly. "Why did you not bring them?"

"They would not come," he answered, "but Miss Ludlow sent you a note." He handed me a folded paper.

I opened it and read with difficulty through blurring tears:

Dear Hugh: It was not the Earl of Hatfield I promised to marry. Your father would never forgive you, should you keep your promise to me. I give you back your promise. Some day, when time has healed the pain in both our hearts, I will see you again. Thank God you are alive! Thank God that you are going to get well! Thank God that you will live to give your father a daughter of fitting rank to comfort his last days, and that you will add no sorrow to his overburdened heart!

BEATRICE.

I love you dearly, Hugh.

I handed the note to my father, and he read it through slowly. Presently he turned to Vincent.

"Is Miss Ludlow still in the hospital, Count Witkowski?" he asked sharply.

I was struck dumb at the title. Vincent a count? Why had I never heard of it during our weeks of intimacy? This was modesty to excess.

"Yes, Earl Hatfield. I think she is waiting for a reply to her note," Vincent answered.

"Miss Caton, will you be so good as to give me my stick?" my father asked the nurse courteously. Leaning on his stick and helped by Vincent's hand, he got painfully to his feet.

"I will bring her to you, Hugh," he said gently, as he bent over and kissed my cheek.

I watched him as he moved feebly from the room, his back bowed, his shoulders drooping, and still leaning heavily on his stick. Not a word was spoken by any of us while he was gone, but my heart was beating heavily with a great dread in which there was only a tiny ray of hope.

It seemed long that he was gone, though the clock said only ten minutes. But what a different man entered the room from the one who had left it! My father carried his shoulders proudly, his face was glowing, and he was no longer leaning on his stick, but on the arm of Beatrice.

One glance was all I could spare my father, and then my eyes sought my darling's face. Oh, how beautiful she was! How tender and glowing were her eyes! How shy and sweet was the air of her graceful figure. She knelt beside me and took my hand, but she did not kiss me. I was glad, for I wanted no other eyes to profane her kisses. One low, rapturous "Hugh!" "Beatrice!" were the only words we exchanged, but we needed no words.

And if we had needed them, Miss Martin would have uttered them for us. She threw herself on my neck and kissed me, heartily and unashamed.

"O Hugh, dear, *dear* Hugh!" she cried between kisses, unabashed by tears that ran down from under her big, round spectacles. "I never hoped to see you *alive*! What *would* have become of us if you 'd *really* gone down to a watery grave! O Hugh! My dear, *dear* boy!"

And then, as she looked around and saw tears everywhere, for even the doctor was noisily blowing his nose, and the nurse openly wiping her eyes, she evidently determined on a diversion.

"And to *think*, Earl Hatfield," she went on, looking up at my father naïvely, "that Beatrice is going to marry an *earl*! It's the one person I always vowed she never *should* marry. But Hugh's *different*. He's—just *Hugh*! And, Hugh," with a twinkling glance at me, "you know now I'll have to raise that *dot* I said I was going to give Beatrice. A hundred thousand pounds is none too much for a countess!"

My father laughed, a rich little chuckle I used to like but had never expected to hear again. I think he understood Miss Martin,—that this was her off-hand, American way of making settlements, and that her American pride had taken this way of letting him know that Beatrice would not come into the family dowerless. My father understood her, and she amused and pleased him. He turned to her now with a stately bow and offered her his arm.

"Miss Martin," he said, "Nurse, Doctor, Count Witkowski, shall we leave the young people alone for a few moments? I think Miss Ludlow may have something to say to my son."

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### BROTHERS ALL

**I**T was the last of June. The roses were in bloom at Hatfield Abbey, and when the roses are in bloom the Abbey is paradise.

But the Abbey would have been paradise to me had there been no roses. For Beatrice was there! And Miss Martin, and Vincent, and Herr Lubella, who was in London on some diplomatic mission connected with the Rumanian Embassy and had run down to the Abbey for the occasion. And Marcel was there, bringing with him his bride, the beautiful and fascinating Thérèse Feronce, and—Baron von Dreidorf!

It was not so wonderful that all these others should be there, assembled for the occasion, for the occasion was my marriage to Beatrice. But the wonder was that Siegfried should be there, too.

I had received a note from him while I still lay in the hospital. The note had been written the day following the news of the sinking of the *Lusitania*. It had been sent to the Abbey and was forwarded to me from there. And it read:

Dear Hugh: I am here in England, a prisoner. I have no idea where to find you, so I am writing to you at your home, hoping it will be forwarded to you in camp. I am writing to tell you with what horror I have heard of the *Lusitania*. I want you to believe that many German hearts will sorrow with Eng-

land and America in the awful tragedy. Do not blame the German people, Hugh. I want to see you, much. If you still love me, will you visit me at the concentration camp?

Thine,

SIEGFRIED.

I had written him at once, telling him that I had been on the *Lusitania* and was still in hospital, but would see him as soon as I could get about. I added that I would arrange a parole for him—I was sure it could be managed—to come to my wedding at the Abbey in June.

The parole was arranged; so that was how Siegfried von Dreidorf came to be at the Abbey with Ferdinand Lubella, Wincenti Witkowski, and Marcel de Villa Réal. Only Harold, of those I loved best, was not there. How gladly would I have given up all the future prospects that now loomed so brilliantly before me, could I have had my splendid brother back!

It was to be a very quiet wedding,—for Harold's sake,—only those friends dear to Beatrice and me staying in the house, and the Rector's family and one or two old friends, who could not be ignored at such a time, coming from the outside.

My father was still very frail—it would take time for him to recover from the shock of Harold's death—but he was finding great comfort in Beatrice. Beatrice and Miss Martin had come back with us to the Abbey straight from Queenstown—straight, that is, if one allows for a brief stay in London to replace the wardrobes lost on the *Lusitania*. I was thankful that they were endowed with what I understand the Yankees call "faculty"; they were most expeditious, and I only lost two

days out of my life on account of that London shopping.

From the moment of their arrival at the Abbey Beatrice took my father under her wing as her special charge. I sometimes felt like grumbling a little because my own rights were impinged upon, since I had to give up Beatrice for morning constitutionals with the earl, or afternoon strolls, or even for long, country drives. But I could not really object when I saw my dear father's eyes daily grow brighter and his old smile returning—only tenderer, less brilliant perhaps, but more *human* than of yore. He had never had a daughter, and I think he enjoyed the novel sensation of being watched, fussed over, and made much of.

But I always had Beatrice to myself in the evenings; for my father's regular evening schedule was a game of cribbage with Miss Martin. I sometimes thought Miss Martin entertained him as much and amused him more than Beatrice. I often heard his low, jolly chuckle through those evening hours, and I never heard it at any other time. In her way Miss Martin was as devoted to my father as Beatrice, and I think she laid herself out to divert him in the evenings; incidentally, also, I believe, to keep him sufficiently engrossed to leave the evenings free for Beatrice and me. There never was a kinder heart than Miss Martin's, or one more thoroughly in sympathy with young people's love-affairs.

Perhaps it was just as well that I could not have Beatrice to myself all of the time. Perhaps,—who knows?—such an excess of sweetness might spoil one's mental digestion or dull the keenness of one's appetite for the society of the loveliest girl in the world. As it was, our daily meetings had all the freshness of first

impressions, and were sought and planned for with the avidity of one perpetually hungry for more.

And by dint of planning and scheming those feasts of daily intercourse were not so meager after all. By rising before the sun, many hours before my father was in danger of opening his eyes, we could have a glorious ride through the high combe north of the park, and over the wide moors beyond, the deep, soft heather drenched with dew, the amber air like sparkling champagne, and Lucifer, star of the morning, shining golden in an amethyst sky in the east. Or at mid-morning, when my father sought his room for an hour's rest, after his constitutional, we would climb down the steep path to the cove where the fishermen live, and watch the boats come in from the deep-sea fishing, laden to the gunwales with the early morning's catch. Or we tramped through rabbit-warrens or deep woods where deer and pheasant were preserved, lingering in lovely, shady spots to talk of wonderful things. And I often invited myself on the afternoon motor-drives, when Miss Martin and Beatrice were both expected to be in attendance. And very often these drives led to the outlying farms, where the tenant farmers and their wives and daughters were presented to Beatrice as the future chatelaine of the Abbey. I think my father chose these drives for the purpose of making the presentation, for he was naïvely proud of Beatrice. I was proud of her, too, and delighted to see her winning the hearts of farmers and fishermen, their wives and children, by the grace of her simple sweetness.

So we managed to snatch many a happy moment together, even in the daytime hours that we both regarded



as sacred to the earl, but the evenings were wholly ours. What glorious moonlight flooded the broad terraces! How brilliantly the diamond points of stars pricked through the velvet of the deep-blue vault that arched the rose gardens as we strolled through them, hand in hand, and recalled all the sweet beginnings of our friendship—in Dresden, in Leipzig, in Italy; or looked forward, though always with sad misgivings, to the happy future in store for us at the Abbey when the awful war should end! The south wind, laden with the breath of roses and honeysuckle, played softly about us; fountains leaped high in air and fell back into their basins with a silvery splash; from his lonely covert the nightingale that had sung me to sleep in my boyhood poured forth his heart to the starry night, and for awhile, in this Paradise of peris, our souls were lulled into forgetfulness of the terrible scenes enacting across that strip of water, gleaming in moonlight and starlight, between the spreading beeches on the south terrace. Six weeks of wonderful courtship! As I sit writing in my dugout on lonely midnights, the distant booming of guns keeping time to my thoughts, I wonder if ever again we two will sit beneath the beeches or wander hand in hand amid the rose-gardens of Hatfield Abbey?

But the courtship days were over, the eve of the great day had arrived. In the morning our little party would walk across the park to the Abbey Church, and Beatrice and I would be married, with all the tenantry, from farmers to fishermen, as witnesses, and bells ringing and children strewing roses in the churchyard path for Bea-

trice to walk upon. For Hatfield held to the old traditions.

Then we would walk back to the wedding-breakfast set on the south terrace in the shade of the great beeches, and tables would be placed below the terrace for the five hundred—more or less—Hatfield people. And after breakfast the people would all go quietly away. There would be none of the games and fireworks that ordinarily celebrate the marriage of the heir, but the people knew why and thought it fitting, for they, too, had loved Harold.

And after breakfast, also, the Marquis de Villa Réal and his bride, the beautiful Marquise, Herr Lubella, Count Witkowski and Baron von Dreidorf would go away, Lubella to the embassy in London, Marcel to his command at Rheims, Vincent to the trenches at Ypres—he was now captain in my regiment, for I had been given a command—and Siegfried to the concentration camp, for his parole would be over. Even my father and Miss Martin were going, the earl insisting on spending the next two weeks at his club in London, and Miss Martin at the Ritz-Carlton, attending to settlements and many matters of business and philanthropy, a whirl that her soul loved, and Beatrice and I would be alone at the Abbey. At the end of two weeks we were to start together for the front, I to my regiment, and she to a hospital not far from Ypres. She would no longer venture under fire with her motor-ambulance. All the future welfare of the House of Hatfield now rested upon Beatrice; she would take no unnecessary risks.

On that evening before the wedding, dinner being long

over and my last walk taken with "Beatrice Ludlow" in the rose-garden, we five comrades—for I cannot bear not to count Siegfried as a comrade, too—sat out on the stone terrace flooded by the light of a full moon, each man with pipe, cigar, or cigarette, as fancy dictated, and at his elbow a little stand for cooling drinks, for the night was tropical in its heat.

The hour was late—we had been late in saying good-night to the ladies and to the earl, who seldom stayed up to such an hour—but there was no thought of time with any one of us. Except Vincent and I, who were to be together at Ypres, who knew when we would ever see each other again? And I suppose it is natural that at such an hour a little strain of melancholy should tinge our talk.

Everyone there, except Herr Lubella, knew what part Siegfried had played in my escape, and loved him for it. It was absolutely necessary that his part in that transaction should be kept an inviolable secret. I could trust Vincent and Marcel with my life and Siegfried's, but none of us knew Herr Lubella so well, and though we believed him to be absolutely trustworthy, we would take no risks and so perhaps have the secret escape and Siegfried condemned as a traitor some day. But it was enough for Herr Lubella that the rest of us received the German officer with open arms, so would he, and during the three days they had been at the Abbey one would have thought we had all been comrades in arms.

Naturally the talk ran on the war and our experiences in it—the most thrilling of all Siegfried's—and in some way the story of Vincent's flight and mine from Germany had come up. Vincent was telling, with great

glee, some episodes that had been bitter enough at the time, making us all laugh by the telling, myself as well.

But Lubella heaved a sigh as Vincent came to a pause.

"I envy you," he declared. "I wish I were in it. Baron Dreidorf, you won't mind, will you? And you won't tell, if I say that with all my heart I wish Rumania would hurry up and join the Entente? I believe she will one of these days."

Siegfried smiled.

"No, I won't 'tell.' I'm afraid she will, Herr Lubella, and I'm sorry. Sorry for us and sorry for her, for I would n't be a good German if I did n't thoroughly believe we will win out in the end. And then—what will happen to Rumania?"

He shook his head, good-naturedly threatening. Lubella laughed.

"I remember, Baron, that we were once rivals of a sort, and neither of us won. Somebody else carried off the prize;" with a smile at me. "That may happen again."

He had not finished speaking when I heard a slight stir at the great entrance-door leading into the darkened hall. I looked up quickly. In the doorway against the black background of the hall, the moonlight flooding her face and simple white evening gown, stood Beatrice. She had thrown a lace scarf over her shoulders to protect her from the evening air, and as she stood hesitating a moment, framed in the arch of the doorway, the soft breeze stirred little tendrils of dark hair about her face and set the filmy lace afloat. Her beautiful eyes were glowing like stars in the radiant moonlight, and she

looked for all the world like one of da Forli's angels. I think we were all of us a little dazed, enchanted by the startling beauty of the picture. Then the four men sprang to their feet and I moved quickly to her side.

"What is it, Beatrice?" I asked, not quite able to keep a note of alarm out of my voice, for there was something strange and unusual in her appearance there at that hour.

She looked at me with a slow smile, half timid, half brave, and put out a hand which I clasped and held.

"Do you mind, Hugh?" she asked gently. Then turning to the others: "You will let me interrupt you for just a moment, won't you? I wanted to say good-by to you all to-night; you know there may be no chance to-morrow, and—it may be a long good-by."

Every man, except Marcel, standing before her, and looking at her with adoring eyes, had once thought himself in love with her. But there was no thought of love in the heart of any of the four as she paused a moment in her little speech, waiting as if for an answer.

But no man was ready with a word and Beatrice went on quickly, hesitating a little, with the color mounting in waves to her sweet face, as we could see by the bright moonlight.

"You have all been such dear friends to me, and you are Hugh's dear friends. If I should never see you again, I want you to remember always that, despite this horrible, fratricidal war, we are all kin—Rumanian, Pole, French, German, English, and American. And when the war is over, however it results, we will forget the terrible past and love each other dearly. Brothers all!"

She put out her hand, as she spoke, first to Lubella, whose beautiful face, clear-cut as a cameo in the moonlight, was convulsed in an effort to control his emotion; then to Marcel, to Vincent and lastly to Siegfried, whose stern-set face might have seemed hostile, except that I knew, and I think Beatrice must have known, that of them all he found it hardest to give her up.

And as each man bowed low over her hand and raised it to his lips, he uttered slowly, and with such solemnity that it had all the effect of an oath, "*Brothers All!*"

Just as she looked on that eve of our wedding-day, like some beautiful spirit of the night through whose transparent countenance glowed the white flame of the holiest of emotions, I see her night after night as I sit alone in my dugout this winter of 1915-16 writing the record of our acquaintance, our friendship, our love. She is not more than thirty miles away, but it is seldom that I can see her, and as I write, I live it all over again and feel her by my side, my comrade for life.

The war has rolled on since that June day, uncoiling its hideous length from week to week in ever-growing ghastliness. Vincent, broken-hearted, mourns his country under the heel of the conqueror, his estate devastated, and his people suffering for the necessities of life. Ferdinand Lubella still frets because Rumania has not yet joined the Entente, while Siegfried chafes at imprisonment and longs to be helping in the great drive the Germans are making in the east through Serbia toward Turkey. And Marcel? Marcel whom I loved, who was first to drink *Bruderschaft* with me in Leipzig

and whose flight from Germany I aided—Marcel, brave and witty, the polished scion of the old French nobility, laid down his life leading a gallant dash when the French took the offensive in October.

Harold and Marcel are both gone; both are out of it all. Perhaps it is as well, for who knows what horrors still lie before us? But my faith does not falter. Some day it will end and *Right will prevail!* And the God of nations, the God of the Englishman, the German, and the Frenchman,—of all the warring brothers,—will know how to bring some great good out of this holocaust of evil to all his bruised and broken children.

THE END







